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CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XX, Issue No. 11 | THURSDAY JANUARY 14, 2010 | www.saipantribune.com | 50¢

OPINION METER

This week's poll:

On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being the lowest and 5 the highest, how would you rate your level of optimism with the second term of the Fitial administration?

Let your voice be heard! Go to www.saipantribune.com to cast your vote.

INSIDE

Ampatuan Case

The first witness in the Mindanao massacre case says he saw Andal Ampatuan Jr. shooting victims as they begged for their lives.

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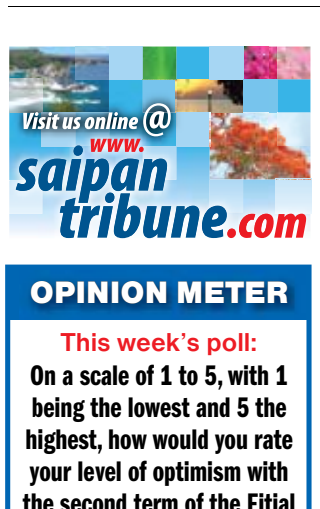

Deadly Quake

A powerful earthquake struck Haiti's capital, toppling everything from simple shacks to the ornate National Palace.

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Staying Put

Conan O'Brien has refused to play along with NBC's plan to move "The Tonight Show."

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FRAUD FOUND
in some ARRA funds' use

> Just like anything else, if there's any kind of wrongdoing, they will be prosecuted.
>
> —Fred Camacho, IT and communications manager, CNMI ARRA Office

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

The office created to watch over how federal stimulus funds are being spent in the Commonwealth has reportedly uncovered multiple cases of fraud that are now being reviewed and investigated.

Fred Camacho, the IT and communications manager of the CNMI American Reinvestment and Re-

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163 pct. drop in number of enacted laws

Lawmakers: It's quality, not quantity that matters

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Hocog

Only 49 of the hundreds of bills introduced in the 16th Legislature became public laws, a steep 163 percent dive from the 129 bills enacted into laws in the 15th Legislature. Lawmakers, however, were quick to point out yesterday that members

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15 suspects caught in weekend sweep

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

The Department of Public Safety conducted a mass apprehension over the weekend that saw the arrest of 15 persons for various alleged offenses, mostly for burglary and theft.

See 15 SUSPECTS on Page 4

YEAR'S FIRST DONATION HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

Bank of Hawaii presents its first donation for the year to the Center for Living Independently in the CNMI in a brief ceremony yesterday morning at the bank in Puerto Rico. The center's executive director, Lydia D. Igitol, front seated, said the $2,500 donation will go a long way in buying supplies for their clientele. Others in photo are, from left standing, Maribel Igitol, CLIC treasurer Helen Sablan, CLIC secretary Janice Sablan, Bank of Hawaii senior vice president John Sheather, CLIC vice president Jose C. Sablan, and Bank of Hawaii assistant vice president Lisa San Nicolas.

Fitial's ex-driver gets 3 years probation

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

The federal court sentenced the former bodyguard and driver of Gov. Benigno R. Fitial yesterday to three years probation on charges that he was engaged in selling methamphetamine or "ice."

U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Alex R. Munson also placed Peter R. Reyes Jr. on six months of home confinement.

Reyes is barred from using or possessing any controlled substance, and from drinking any alcoholic beverages during his probation. He is prohibited from entering poker arcades and from gambling.

See EX-DRIVER on Page 4

NMC assures accreditation, services won't be affected. **PAGE 3**

Retirement Fund names new life insurance carrier. **PAGE 5**

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Local

Fitial line item vetoes $3.881M pork barrel bill

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial line item vetoed on Tuesday a $3.881 million local appropriations bill, disapproving what he said were not priority spending such as $25,000 for an annual fishing derby, $25,000 for portable toilets at the Santa Lourdes Shrine, or $50,000 for the 2010 Saipan Liberation Day activities.

House Local Bill 16-35, S1, D5 aims to appropriate $3,881,300 in poker revenues for Fiscal Year 2010.

But Fitial said this amount is more than the $3,497,000 actually collected in FY 2009 and the estimated collections for FY 2010.

"As such, after assessing the various appropriations, priority was given to education, youth programs, and matters addressing the health and safety of our community. Inclusion of the other appropriations would exceed the projected collections for fiscal year 2010," the governor said.

HLB 16-35, authored by former Reps. Justo Quitugua (D-Saipan), David M. Apatang (R-Saipan), and Oscar M. Babauta (Cov-Saipan), is now Saipan Local Law 16-10.

'Inequity'

Section 6 of the pork barrel bill mandates the Finance secretary to allot funds to items in Section 2B(1)-(4) fully and proportionately for the remaining appropriations should collections fall short of $3,881,300.

"However, the bill fails to explain the rationale for that inequity. It fails to explain why the first four items were prioritized," Fitial said in a Jan. 12, 2010 letter to Saipan and Northern Islands Legislative Delegation chair pro tem Rep. Ramon "Ray" A. Tebuteb (R-Saipan) and House Speaker Froilan C. Tenorio (Cov-Saipan).

These first four items included $100,000 for the Saipan Higher Education Funding Assistance or SHEFA, $50,000 for the CNMI Little League, $25,000 for the Fishing Derby which he disapproved, and $15,000 for the Agricultural Fair.

Manta Ray Band

Fitial, however, didn't cut the $39,985 re-appropriated for Saipan Southern High School's Manta Ray Band, which will perform at the Carnegie Hall in New York City on April 17 to 21 this year.

"This administration strongly supports this activity," he said.

He said even during these tough economic times, children must be encouraged to excel in music and the arts.

"Our children should not suffer because of our geographic location. The opportunity for the CNMI to be represented at the Carnegie Hall is a prestigious one, which we embrace," said Fitial, who signed the local bill into law a day after he was sworn in for his second term in office.

Another section of the local bill, Section 3(B), aims to re-appropriate funds from Saipan Local Law 15-12.

But Fitial said shortfalls from other appropriation acts of the same source must be funded before these new appropriations are addressed.

The governor also said that a re-appropriation on Section 7 of the local bill is vague.

"It neither identifies the exact takings nor the amounts needed for each taking," he said, referring to the funds originally allocated for Lot N. 364 R/W to "various right-of-way takings in Precinct III."

'Work closely with Finance'

Fitial also urged the Legislature to work closely with the Department of Finance so as not to exceed appropriations contrary to collections and to fully fund previously appropriated projects and programs before making new appropriations from the same sources.

On Dec. 22, the Saipan and Northern Islands Legislative Delegation reconsidered the $3.881 million pork barrel bill in less than 15 minutes after the bill's defeat. The local delegation eventually passed the bill.

Lawmakers spent two hours debating and amending the pork barrel bill. The discussions reached emotional highs during floor amendment discussion, and when the bill got defeated, reconsidered, then passed.

Other appropriations also disapproved by Fitial were $150,000 for a Kagman road paving; $100,000 to pave Fedus Road; and $35,000 for power extension at Obyan Beach.

The governor, however, maintained $100,000 for SHEFA operations; $50,000 for the CNMI Little League; $15,000 for the Agricultural Fair; $40,000 for the construction of guard rails on Airport Road; and $20,000 to San Vicente basketball court repairs.

Fitial also maintained the $10,000 for landscaping at the Koblerville Youth Center; $6,300 for the San Antonio Manhoben Center; $100,000 for the Northern Marianas Trades Institute; $75,00 for the Saipan Zoning Office; and $80,000 for the Saipan and Northern Islands Dog Control Act.

CPA posts increased cargo in first quarter

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

The Commonwealth Ports Authority recorded an increase in the volume of inbound cargoes from October to December 2009, the first quarter of Fiscal Year 2010.

During the three-month period, CPA registered a 24-percent increase in the volume of cargo that arrived through the Port of Saipan, from 74,149 tonnage in the first quarter of 2009 to 91,686 tonnage in first quarter of 2010.

Data obtained by *Saipan Tribune* showed that fuel shipment remains the top performing inbound cargo, which jumped from 26,648 tons in first quarter of 2009 to 38,112 tons in the first quarter of 2010.

Delivery of food, beverages and tobacco came next, registering 19,061 tonnage in 2010, compared to just 17,007 tonnage in the same three-month period in 2009.

Other commodities, meantime, totaled 19,043 tonnage during the period from October to December 2009, a slight drop from the 20,500 recorded during the same period in 2008.

For October, CPA noted a slight increase of 2 percent in total inbound cargoes, from 31,282 tonnage in 2008 to 31,940 tonnage in 2009. Shipments for fuel and food were the biggest cargoes accommodated in this period.

For November 2009, incoming shipment to Saipan rose by 10 percent. From only 26,688 tonnage in November 2008, deliveries jumped to 29,423 tonnage in November 2009. Construction materials and cement shipments made up the bulk of the increase.

The biggest increase in cargo movement was recorded last month when CPA posted a total of 30,323 tonnage, compared to just 16,179 tonnage in 2008. This reflects an overall hike of 87 percent.

Records showed that fuel shipment totaled 11,711 tonnage last month; other commodities, 6,728 tonnage; food, beverages, and alcohol, 6,590 tonnage; vehicles/heavy equipment, 1,839 tonnage; and construction materials, 2,366 tonnage.

Prior to this period, CPA had been seeing significant drops in the movement of commodities at the island's seaport compared to previous years. The CNMI experienced a severe drop in the movement of inbound and outbound commodities due to the demise of the garment industry early last year.

How is your baby growing?

If your child displays any of the following signs of possible developmental delay, talk to your doctor, nurse, or other health care provider about it:

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- Cannot stand when supported
- Does not search for objects that are hidden while he or she watches
- Says no single words ("mama" or "dada")
- Does not learn to use gestures, such as waving or shaking head
- Does not point to objects or pictures
- Does not play peek-a-boo by 8 months
- Experiences a dramatic loss of skills he or she once had

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Information adapted from the Center of Disease Control and Prevention, Learn the Signs. Act Early.
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Big Steps for Little Feet

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NMC assures accreditation, services won't be affected

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The newly appointed dean of Students Services and Programs at the Northern Marianas College assured students yesterday that the issue surrounding the college's president will not in any way affect the services being provided by the institution.

Leo Pangelinan told *Saipan Tribune* yesterday that NMC will continue to provide the high caliber services that students and the community expect from the college.

"The transition period will not affect the services we offer to our students," he said.

The Board of Regents on Tuesday suspended NMC president Dr. Carmen Fernandez indefinitely, pending the results of two investigations being done regarding some "sensitive issues" at the college. The board named Lorraine Cabrera interim president.

Pangelinan described yesterday's atmosphere at the college as "running smoothly as usual."

"Things are running smoothly in general, thanks to the great support from students, staff and faculty," Pangelinan told *Saipan Tribune*, adding that the college is still excited about welcoming the opening of a new semester this month.

Fernandez's suspension occurred on the second day of registration week at the college. As of yesterday, NMC reported about 800 enrollees and it expects the number to increase in coming days.

Admission and registration will be extended to 5pm on Tuesday, Jan. 19.

Last semester, the institution enrolled over 900 students, both foreign and local residents.

This semester, Pangelinan said, a first year programs manager will be onboard to develop and execute programs for new students. This is intended to build a stronger affiliation between students and support programs, including pairing students with peers and career professional mentors.

The Associated Students of NMC and the Office of Student Activities and Leadership will also be developing and promoting events that will engage students with campus life, diversity, and opportunities for experiential learning outside the classroom.

Accreditation work

Galvin Deleon Guerrero, NMC's accreditation liaison officer and director of Institutional Effectiveness, also assured students and the community that accreditation work would continue and won't be affected.

"The Northern Marianas College has made great strides to achieve accreditation reaffirmation. Our efforts will not be adversely affected and we will continue to move forward with linking program review, planning, and budgeting," he said.

He said the college has also been moving forward in its work to institutionalize a systematic program review process. In fact, he said NMC is in the midst of its third cycle of program review.

"An important part of the program review process is using the results of program review to develop institutional priorities that will inform budgeting and planning decision making," Guerrero said.

He said the community, and especially students, should be reassured that the college remains diligent in meeting accreditation standards and maintaining NMC's full accreditation status.

In October 2009, NMC submitted its Mid-Term Report to the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges and the Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities.

The commission will be informing the college later this month whether or not the report will be accepted.

Bill on Lau Lau Bay as new boat launching site is now PL 16-49

A bill designating Lau Lau Bay as a new boat launching site for quicker response times for emergencies on the eastern coastline of Saipan is now Public Law 16-49.

House Bill 16-219, HD1 became law on Jan. 6 when two-thirds of the members of the House of Representatives and the Senate overrode Gov. Benigno R. Fitial's veto of the bill.

However, it was not until Jan. 12 that Fitial assigned a number for the new public law.

"The bill became Public Law 16-49," Fitial said in a letter to newly sworn in House Speaker Froilan C. Tenorio (Cov-Saipan) and Senate Pres. Paul A. Manglona (R-Rota).

Rep. Joseph Deleon Guerrero (R-Saipan), author of HB 16-219, said yesterday that he looks forward to the promulgation of the regulations.

"A public law is meaningless unless the agency authorized to promulgate the regulations, which in this case is the Department of Lands and Natural Resources, actually does it," Deleon Guerrero told *Saipan Tribune.*

Under the new law, DLNR, in consultation with the Department of Public Safety's Boating Safety Section, Coastal Resources Management, and the Division of Environmental Quality, is authorized to establish the new boat launching site at Lau Lau Bay and to temporarily delineate the boat launching corridor for the immediate use of fishermen and Boating Safety officials until a permanent structure is established.

The DLNR secretary is also further authorized to promulgate regulations consistent with the law.

The new boat launching site is located adjacent to Forbidden Island, Tank Beach, and Marine Beach, which are popular among tourists and locals. ***(Haidee V. Eugenio)***

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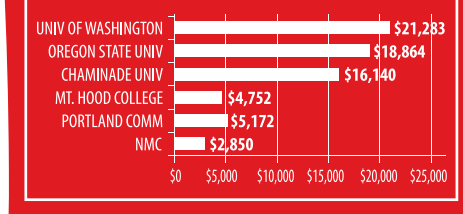

Spring 2010 Semester Dates
Registration
January 11 to January 16, 2010
Late Registration (Extended)
January 19, 2010
First Day for Fall Classes
January 19, 2010
English Placement Tests
Jan 14 (Thu) 5pm-8pm Rm A-6
Jan 15 (Fri) 9am-12pm Rm A-6
Math Placement Tests
Jan 14 (Thu) 5pm-7pm Rm A-9

For more information, log on to www.nmcnet.edu or contact the Office of Admission and Records at 234-5498 extension 1537.

Need financial assistance?
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From Page 1

should be judged on the "substance" of their legislation and their stand on issues.

In the 14th Legislature, 99 bills introduced by lawmakers became public laws.

Sen. Pete P. Reyes (R-Saipan), who was the Senate president during the 16th Legislature, said the "quality instead of quantity" of bills that became law is the true measure of lawmakers' effectiveness.

"It's not the number of legislation you introduced that determines whether you're a good or bad legislator; but the number of bills that have significant effect on people," Reyes told *Saipan Tribune.*

Reyes had one bill, of which he was the main author, that became law in his tenure as Senate president.

His Senate Bill 16-13, which became Public Law 16-15 on Sept. 5, 2008, suspended the scholarship liability in certain instances of returning college students who could not find jobs in the CNMI government due to budgetary limitations or a post is filled by a foreign worker.

He also said that lawmakers should follow through on the bills they introduced.

"A good legislator does not whine about his bill not being entertained because it's his responsibility to lobby for the bill's passage. He should know the dynamics of introducing and passing bills," Reyes added.

Former Rep. Tina Sablan, the author of the Open Government Act popular initiative that was ratified by voters in the Nov. 7 general elections, said in her view, legislators should be "judged by the substance of their work, including but not limited to the substance of the bills they introduce, the reports they author, the positions they take on important issues, and the potentially harmful bills that they help prevent from passing, as well as the bills they help improve."

Sablan's popular initiative re-applied the Open Government Act to the Legislature, promoting transparency and accountability among lawmakers.

Sablan's entry into the 16th House of Representatives was instrumental in more debate and discussions of bills and resolutions introduced by members.

Rep. Stanley Torres (Ind-Saipan) believes that many of the laws passed were only amendments or corrections to existing laws.

"It's all about the substance or quality, not the number or quantity that's important. People should not be fast in judging lawmakers on the basis of the number of bills they introduced and became laws," he said.

Torres was the main author of two bills in the 16th Legislature that became public laws. Both laws amended the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design Standards Act, as well as the Alcoholic Beverage Control Act.

Rep. Joseph Deleon Guerrero (R-Saipan) said many concerns come across lawmakers' desks and they always have to weigh the pros and cons of introducing bills to address those concerns.

"Every bill I author is important enough to warrant introduction. The number of bills passed is not the best measure of a lawmaker's job. Let the people be the judge," he said.

Four of the bills he introduced in the 16th Legislature became public laws, including P.L. 16-49, designating Lau Lau Bay as a new boat launching site to speed up response time during emergencies on the eastern coastline. ***(See story on Page 3)***

But among the four bills, Deleon Guerrero is most known for his House Bill 16-220, which became P.L. 16-43, providing for the conduct of a gubernatorial runoff election and the counting of absentee ballots on Election Day.

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial and Lt. Gov. Eloy S. Inos won the CNMI's first gubernatorial runoff race over former Republican Rep. Heinz S. Hofschneider and former House Speaker Arnold I. Palacios on Nov. 23.

Deleon Guerrero also introduced the bills that became P.L. 16-14, which lifts hiring restriction on foreign workers at the Commonwealth Utilities Corp., as well as P.L. 16-39 or the Tobacco Control Fund Act Appropriation for FY 2009.

Top lawmakers

Figures in this report include only the main authors of bills, and not the secondary co-sponsors.

Based on a review of bills signed into law in the 16th Legislature, former Rep. Victor Hocog (Ind-Rota) introduced the most. He was the main author of eight of these bills, and the number excludes those in which he was among the secondary sponsors.

Most of Hocog's bills appropriated money to programs and services on Rota. His bill, which became PL 16-7, also earmarked $3.4 million in Marianas Public Lands Trust revenues for the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. for emergency power generation services from Aggreko and for contractual obligations to CUC from FY 2009 and 2010.

Former Rep. Justo Quitugua (D-Saipan) came in second with six bills where he was the main author. Most popular among these bills was the one that became PL 16-46, or the no-smoking law. Fitial signed Quitugua's Smoke-Free Air Act of 2008 bill on Sept. 29, with much fanfare.

Besides Rep. Joseph Deleon Guerrero, former Rep. Rosemond Santos (R-Saipan) also authored four bills that became law. Santos introduced bills amending laws on alcoholic beverage sale, driver's license, and probation reform.

Rep. Heinz S. Hofschneider (R-Saipan) authored three of the bills that became public laws in the 16th Legislature, including the CUC Private Sector Partnership Act of 2008, and the Commonwealth Autism Commission Act of 2008. His other bill also amended the Public Lands Act of 2006.

Former representative and now Sen. Ralph Torres (R-Saipan) also introduced three bills that became law in the 16th Legislature: the CNMI Youth Congress Reorganization Act of 2008, exempting the Public School System and the Commonwealth Health Center from the ban on hiring foreign workers, and mandating the government to prioritize and pay employer contributions of employees who retire.

Former House Floor Leader Joseph N. Camacho authored two bills that became law, allowing the sale of alcoholic beverages at commercial airports, and the CNMI Juvenile Justice System Act.

Former Rep. Edwin Aldan authored two appropriation bills for Tinian programs and activities that became law.

Former Rep. Oscar M. Babauta's bill amended the definition of "alien" to be in line with the Covenant definition. The other one appropriated money to different programs.

Former Sen. Joseph Mendiola introduced SB 16-34, which became PL 16-29 on Feb. 18, 2009, amending the election law. He also authored SB 16-44, which became PL 16-34 on March 23, 2009, amending the Nurse Practice Act.

Other key laws passed

Rep. Ray N. Yumul (R-Saipan), former chair of the House Ways and Means Committee, authored the bill that became PL 16-32 or the Fiscal Year 2009 Budget Act. He also authored the bill that reprogrammed money within the Marianas Visitors Authority budget.

Rep. Diego T. Benavente's HB 16-112 provided for the conduct of election for the CNMI's non-voting delegate to the U.S. House of Representatives.

Former House Speaker Arnold I. Palacios authored the bill that revised CUC's utility rate structure.

Newly sworn in Senate President Paul A. Manglona (R-Rota) authored SB 16-22, which became PL 16-38 on April 24, 2009, amending the election law.

Other authors

Rep. Ramon "Ray" A. Tebuteb's bill amending the Safe Diving Act of 1990 also became PL 16-6 on July 11, 2008.

Sen. Henry San Nicolas (Cov-Tinian) introduced a bill that gave mayors of each municipality an opportunity to comment prior to final action by the Department of Public Lands. His SB 16-19 was vetoed by Gov. Benigno R. Fitial on July 18, 2008, but the Senate and House overrode the governor's veto. The bill became PL 16-8 on July 31, 2008.

Former Sen. Maria "Frica" Pangelinan (D-Saipan) authored a bill that amended the Public Utilities Commission Act to permit CUC to procure emergency power without PUC's approval. Her SB 16-038 became PL 16-9 on Aug. 1, 2008.

Former Rep. Joseph Reyes (R-Saipan) introduced a bill that required Retirement Fund members' disability to be certified by a physician specialized in that field. His HB 16-118 became PL 16-19 on Nov. 7, 2008.

Former Sen. Paterno S. Hocog's SB 16-52, renaming the Rota Veteran Memorial Park the Cpl. Joe G. Charfauros Jr. Rota Veteran Memorial Park, became PL 16-40 on May 12, 2009.

"In my years in the Legislative Bureau, the 15th Legislature introduced the most number of bills that became law, and the 16th had the lowest number," Senate Clerk Dolores Bermudes said.

EX-DRIVER

From Page 1

Munson also required Reyes to perform 100 hours of community service and pay a $100 special assessment fee.

The judge, however, authorized Reyes to travel to the Philippines for necessary medical treatment. Upon his return to Saipan, he is required to surrender his passport to the clerk of court.

At yesterday's hearing, assistant U.S. attorney James Benedetto recommended a sentence of six months in prison and three years of supervised release.

Robert Torres, counsel for Reyes, recommended three years of probation rather than a prison term so that Reyes could seek medical help. Torres asked the court to address Reyes' medical treatment first.

Torres said his client had obtained a medical referral to the Philippines on Jan. 25, 2010, for treatment.

Reyes was arrested in September 2009 for allegedly selling "ice" to a Drug Enforcement Administration's "confidential source" in the parking lot of the governor's office on Capital Hill on March 16, 2009, according to a criminal complaint.

The U.S. government originally charged Reyes with one count of possession of a controlled substance within 1,000 feet of a playground with intent to distribute.

The U.S. government later filed a superseding information charging him with one count of possession of a controlled substance with intent to distribute.

Reyes entered an agreement with the U.S. government, pleading guilty to one count of possession of a controlled substance with intent to distribute.

15 SUSPECTS

From Page 1

DPS spokesman Eric F. David said yesterday that detectives of the Criminal Investigation Bureau presented their investigative findings to the Superior Court, prompting judges to issue several arrest warrants Friday.

David said the 15 arrested individuals are Manuel Quitano, Alberto Villanueva, Datius Kolmar, Olkeril M. Techur, Roger Jones Sellem, Robert Sellem, Jerry Sammy, Johnny John, Freddy Taisacan Pelisamen, Terrence C. Cabrera, George Moses Jr., Nick Lizama Muña, Jeremy Sasamoto, and two male juveniles.

Quitano was arrested for burglary, theft, and theft of a vehicle.

Villanueva and Kolmar were arrested for burglary, theft, and conspiracy to commit burglary and theft.

Techur and Cabrera were apprehended for separate burglary, theft, and criminal mischief incidents.

Roger Sellem was arrested for burglary, theft, and theft of vehicle, while Robert Sellem was apprehended for theft of vehicle.

Pelisamen, Johnny, and Sammy were arrested for separate burglary and theft incidents.

Muña was arrested for disturbing the peace, and criminal mischief.

Sasamoto was arrested for disturbing the peace, and assault and battery.

Moses was arrested for criminal mischief.

The two juveniles were arrested for assault with a dangerous weapon, attempted robbery, and conspiracy to commit robbery.

RELATED NEWS

- Police coordination helps solve bar burglary. **PAGE 9**
- Burglars trade stolen computers for 'ice.' **PAGE 5**

FRAUD FOUND

From Page 1

covery Act Office, declined to discuss specifics of these individual cases but he confirmed the discovery of possible fraudulent cases related to ARRA funds.

"The ARRA office is working closely with both our local Attorney General's Office as well as the U.S. Attorney's Office to investigate any and all potential cases of fraud," said Camacho.

He said there are "multiple cases currently under review and investigation."

"Just like anything else, if there's any kind of wrongdoing, they will be prosecuted accordingly," he added.

Camacho said these potential fraud cases began surfacing last month, soon after the U.S. Inspector General Office conducted a presentation on what the local ARRA office should watch out for.

Camacho said the U.S. Inspector General's Office had highlighted potential "red flags" facing the CNMI as it spends the ARRA funding, reiterating the important role the ARRA office will play in finding possible wrong usage and application of federal monies. Camacho described the role of his office as the "lookout" for these cases.

He disclosed that as soon as they learned about all the federal and local guidelines on the use of ARRA funds, the CNMI ARRA office immediately submitted to both the U.S. Inspector General's Office and the Attorney General's Office a report of possible wrongdoing by some individuals and agencies.

He declined to elaborate further, saying this may jeopardize the ongoing probe on these cases.

This "early correction" in the application of ARRA money, Camacho said, would be of great help in the future audit that will be conducted by the federal government.

ARRA is a new federal program with unique guidelines and regulations.

During a recent training with Michael Janiga of the U.S. Inspector General's Office, Camacho said the official emphasized important guidelines that must be followed when spending ARRA money.

"We learned a lot, and have always been committed to a constructive working relationship with federal officials. All of us want to ensure that federal funds are expended appropriately," he said.

The U.S. Inspector General's Office had also cited the need for transparency, and Camacho said the CNMI ARRA office has worked diligently to maintain the highest level of transparency and accountability of these funds.

"We are extremely careful with public funds and encourage all agencies dealing with ARRA funding to work closely with our office to ensure that all guidelines and regulations are being met," said Camacho.

As of Dec. 30, 2009, the CNMI has so far drawn down at least $12 million of the estimated $97 million in federal ARRA funding awarded to all Commonwealth agencies.

For the first quarter of Fiscal Year 2010 alone, the CNMI has drawn down $7.6 million while over $3 million was drawn down in previous periods.

The administration earlier disclosed that the CNMI has so far been awarded over $90 million in ARRA grant and spent $7 million to $8 million of those.

The CNMI has been having "temporary issues" like the "Buy America" clause under the ARRA Act, and transparency issues, which have been recently addressed by both parties.

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial last Dec. 18 issued a memorandum mandating all Executive Branch departments to ensure that no unjustified delays in the proper and lawful procurement, selection, and execution of contractual relationships inhibit the ability of the CNMI government to execute and complete projects.

Retirement Fund names new life insurance carrier

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The NMI Retirement Fund has named Individual Assurance Company as its new life insurance carrier.

Fund Administrator Mark A. Aguon confirmed yesterday that IAC was awarded the contract but he said the rates are still being finalized at present.

IAC won the contract against Netcare, the company that used to handle this service for the Fund.

Saipan Tribune learned that IAC and Netcare were the only bidders that responded to the emergency request for proposals by the Monday deadline.

The agency has been looking for a new life insurance carrier after Netcare terminated its contract with the Fund on Dec. 15 due to a contract dispute. The company had wanted to raise its insurance premiums to more than double, which the Fund opposed.

Aguon described the IAC proposal as "competitive and lower" than Netcare's offer, which was used as the basis for the Fund's decision.

Saipan Tribune learned that IAC first served as the Fund's insurance carrier in 1986. In 2008, the company was outbid by Netcare.

Aguon said contract for this insurance service is two years.

"The contract award is final but the rate is not…because we're still finalizing it," Aguon said.

He disclosed that IAC has provided different options for the Retirement Fund.

The emergency regulation was initially issued last month but the Fund extended it through Jan. 11 to encourage more participants.

In the absence of a new carrier, all claims inquiry are being directed to the Group Health Life Insurance Program, according to Aguon.

Netcare Health and Insurance terminated its contract with the NMI Retirement Fund after it failed to settle a contract dispute with the agency.

Group of burglars trades stolen computers for 'ice'

A group of alleged burglars broke into an establishment, stole two laptops, then traded the stolen items for methamphetamine or "ice."

Police identified the suspects as Marvin Ringlen, 18; Alberto Villanueva, 23; Nelsin Saimon, 23; and Kolmar Datius, 21.

Police served the arrest warrants on Ringlen, Villanueva, and Datius on Friday for burglary, theft, and conspiracy to commit burglary and theft. Saimon has yet to be arrested.

Datius, a security guard, was implicated for allegedly not doing anything despite seeing the burglary in progress.

During Monday's hearing, Superior Court associate judge Kenneth Govendo imposed a $25,000 cash bail for each of the suspects. Preliminary hearing was set for Jan. 19, 2010.

In her report, detective Melissa Bauleong stated that a police officer responded to the Fun Fun Central Entertainment Center in Finasisu on June 29, 2009, after receiving a report that the establishment had been burglarized.

Bauleong said the officer learned that the burglars entered the establishment by forcibly opening the reinforced metal bars and shattering the glass window in the bathroom. The officer noticed bloodstains on the window.

The burglars stole two laptop computers that were in the cashier area and couch.

A few months later, on Dec. 14, 2009, detective J. Olopai obtained information from a confidential informant about the persons responsible for the burglary, Bauleong said.

The confidential informant even disclosed that after the burglary, Ringlen had a fresh cut on his right middle finger, sustained while climbing through shattered glass in the bathroom window of Fun Fun.

During separate interviews, the suspects, except for Datius, admitted participation in the burglary. Datius only claimed that he saw two men outside Fun Fun.

Bauleong said Ringlen had disclosed that it was Saimon's idea to burglarize Fun Fun.

Ringlen apparently saw Datius standing in the parking lot of Cool Laundry, watching them when they broke into Fun Fun. Saimon, however, assured the group not to worry about Datius.

It was Ringlen and Villanueva who allegedly forced open the bathroom, while Saimon waited in a car a few meters away.

As soon as he got in, Ringlen allegedly took the two laptop computers. The group, excluding Datius, proceeded to Town House in Susupe. Using a pay phone, Ringlen allegedly called a Chinese male named Bong, who arrived, took the laptops, then handed the group an undetermined amount of "ice." ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

Man gets 41 months for armed robbery

Angel Barcinas Manglona was sentenced yesterday to 41 months in prison for his role in the Aug. 4, 2008, robbery of Rota Poker, according to Leonardo Rapadas, U.S. Attorney for the Districts of Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands.

The sentencing stems from a plea agreement entered into between Manglona and the federal government in which Manglona agreed to plead guilty to use of a Hobbs Act robbery for his role in the robbery of Rota Poker, in violation of Title 18, U.S. Code Section 1951(a).

U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Alex Munson sentenced Manglona to 41 months in prison in a federal correctional institute, to be followed by a term of three years of supervised release.

Manglona now awaits relocation to a mainland federal facility pending designation by the U.S. Bureau of Prisons.

The case was investigated by agents from the Bureau of Alcohol Tobacco Firearms and Explosives, as well as the Department of Public Safety on Rota, and was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney James J. Benedetto. ***(PR)***

THE U.S. ARMY RECRUITING COMMAND

Seeks office space along Beach Road or in Garapan, Saipan for a Recruiting Office.

The Army requires approx. 760 rentable square feet (RSF), to include a private restroom, two (2) reserved parking stalls for Government vehicles 24/7, located on a major thoroughfare, with good potential for exposure and signage.

Lessor/Landlord must be willing to use the U. S. Government lease and terms and perform any required build out on a reimbursable basis in accordance with the Government specifications.

If interested, please reply and include the following information: contact information; your affiliation with the lease space; RSF available; street address and unit number of lease space; and confirmation that the Lessor/Landlords is willing and able to use the U. S. Government Lease and perform the necessary build out.

Please send the requested information to the following by 5:00PM, January 22, 2010, to USACE, Real Estate, Bldg. 230, Fort Shafter, Hawaii 96858-5440 or FAX (808) 438-1328. Send your email responses to Larry.D.Degroot@usace.army.mil. You will be contacted upon receipt of your information.

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Local Census Office job fairs draw 1,000-plus applicants

The CNMI Local Census Office has completed its Census Job Fairs on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota. Applications are still being accepted and mandatory testing is taking place at the Local Census Office via appointment.

"We are pleased to report that we met our first recruitment goal with over 1,000 applicants who have turned in applications and have been tested," said Juan S. Borja, Local Census office manager. "We are in the processes of notifying applicants of their test scores and organizing the applicant files, which is a huge task with the large number of applicants."

Test results are now available for all Job Fair applicants and results can be given to applicants who call or come to the office. Those who did not pass the Census test have the ability to re-take the test once. It will be necessary to sign up for the test by calling the Census Office at 288-3027/23.

As a reminder, all applicants must submit a copy of their high school diploma and picture ID to the Local Census Office in order for their application to be considered for employment.

Tinian and Rota will have one additional day for retesting and for anyone who still needs to take the Census test. Rota testing will take place on Tuesday, Jan. 19, and Tinian testing on Thursday, Jan. 21. Applicants must sign up for the test in advance by calling the Local Census Office in Saipan to register and get location details.

Local Census Office personnel are now in the process of sorting applicants by position and will begin the task of completing a hiring matrix for all applicants who have passed the test. Applicants are assessed based the following criteria: work experience, managerial/clerical experience (for supervisors and clerks), educational background, test score, veterans' preference and telephone interview.

"After we complete the matrix for each applicant, the next step for those that have passed the test will be a telephone interview. Timing of the interviews will depend on the position for which the person has applied," Borja said. Less than 20 positions are slated to begin work in January and February. The majority, or about 300 people, will begin in mid- to late March. "We expect the bulk of the telephone interviews to begin in early February and last for several weeks," he added.

ON THE NET

http://www.commerce.gov.mp

CONTACT INFO

Local Census Office:
288-3027/23

REQUIREMENTS FOR APPLICANTS

- Must be at least 18 years old and a high school graduate or have a GED. Some people, however, may be hired at age 16 if they meet conditions of employment set by local laws and are high school graduates.
- Be a U.S. citizen (However, if not a U.S. citizen, an applicant may be considered if qualified workers are still needed as translators or enumerators with special language skills)
- Not be currently employed by local/federal law enforcement agencies
- Pass a written test of basic skills
- Complete an interview
- Must submit Police Clearance with no criminal record
- Must submit to FBI fingerprint screening
- Pass a drug screening
- Have a social security number before being appointed
- Have a valid driver's license (for most field jobs)
- Be available for paid training and scheduled work hours

Source: CNMI Local Census Office

After the top candidates have been determined, the FBI fingerprint screening, local police clearance and drug screening will take place. "There are many steps that must be completed before a person begins employment with the Local Census Office. That is why we began the process several months in advance so that we will be ready when the operation begins on April 1," Borja said.

Positions include enumerators, or the people who actually go into the villages to collect the forms and follow-up, to supervisors who help manage the process. Other positions include clerks, field operations supervisors, crew leaders and crew leader assistants. Full time and part time positions are available and the number of hours worked depends on the individual's job duties and availability.

Applications are being accepted at the Local Census Office. All information about job opportunities is posted on 2010 CNMI Census tab on the CNMI Department of Commerce Web site at http://www.commerce.gov.mp. Office hours are Monday to Friday, 8am to 5pm. The office is located on International Terminal Loop next to the Saipan International Airport. For more information, call the Local Census Office at 288-3027/23. ***(PR)***

NEWS BRIEFS

Election Commission cancels Rota meeting

The Commonwealth Election Commission said yesterday that its scheduled meeting yesterday, Jan. 13, 2010, at the Rota Hotel on Rota, was cancelled until further notice. Anyone requiring other information may call the commission's office at 664-VOTE (8683) or by sending electronic mail to info@votecnmi.gov.mp or executivedirector@votecnmi.gov.mp. ***(PR)***

Adult Basic Education Spring 2010 Calendar

The Northern Marianas College's Adult Basic Education program, a program under the Division of Community Programs and Services, has announced the following academic dates for the Spring 2010 Semester:

- Registration for Returning Students: Jan 25-26, 10am-6pm, ABE
- Registration for New Students: Jan 27-28, 10am-6pm, ABE
- Late Registration: Jan 29 and Feb 2, 9am-4pm, ABE
- Student Orientation: Feb 1, 5pm-6:30pm, D-1
- Add/Drop for Students: Feb 3-12, 8am-5pm, ABE

First Day of Instruction:

- MWF Classes: Feb 3 (Wednesday)
- TTh Classes: Feb 4 (Thursday)
- Sat. Classes: Feb 6
- Sun. Classes: Feb 7
- Last Day of Instruction: April 30

For more information, log on to www.nmcnet.edu or contact the ABE Office at 234-5498 Ext. 1723 or 1724. ***(NMC)***

Puengin Inetnon this Friday

Puengin Inetnon will be held this Friday, Jan. 15, 2010 at the Kagman Community Center's parking lot. Puengin Inetnon is Kagman's Friday Night Market that will take place every government payday. It will begin at 4:30pm and end at 10pm.

This week's vendors feature Lynn's Barbeque, Fong's Bakery, Champs Shave Ice, U2 Collections, and The Library Bookmobile. Puengin Inetnon is still looking for interested vendors to sell food, drinks, produce, fish, clothing, and crafts. Interested vendors can call 256-7678 for applications.

Puengin Inetnon is a family oriented event. Alcohol will be prohibited from the event. All are welcome. Come attend Puengin Inetnon for some family fun, right here in Kagman. ***(PR)***

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
Office of the Executive Director

INVITATION FOR BIDS
CUC-IFB-10-012

The Office of the Executive Director! Commonwealth Utilities Corporation, is soliciting sealed bids for the construction of **SAIPAN WELL ISOLATION PROJECT**, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

A non-refundable payment of **$350.00** is required for each set of Plans, Specifications, and Proposal Forms, available on or after **January 11, 2010** at the Water Division Office, CUC, Saipan. A pre-bid Conference for this project is scheduled at **9:00 a.m.**, on **January 15, 2010**, at the CUC Conference Room, Saipan. A project site visit is scheduled following the pre-bid meeting.

One (1) original and five (5) copies must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked **"CUC-IFB-10-012 Construction of Saipan Well Isolation Project"** to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor Joeten Dandan Commercial Building P.O . Box 501220, Saipan! MP 96950, no later than **10:00 AM local time (CST), Wednesday, January 27, 2010**, at which time they will be publicly open and read aloud. Late submissions and conditional bids will not be considered.

A bid guarantee of 15 percent of the total bid price must accompany the bids. The security deposit may be in cash, certified check, cashier's check, or bid bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury. A performance and payment bond of hundred (100%) percent each of the total proposal price will be required upon the execution of the contract by the successful bidders. Surety companies must hold a certificate of authority from the U.S. Secretary of the Treasury as an acceptable surety for proposal security. The Contractor will be required to submit payment and performance bonds from a U.S. Treasury listed company. No advance payment will be authorized on the project or an Irrevocable Letter of Credit (100% aggregate contract cost/CUC Beneficiary) or a payment bond. All insurers questions, concerns and qualification should be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI1s Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). A Clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI1s Insurance Code.

The bidder is required to submit a copy of his CNMI Business license in compliance with the Contractor's Registration and Licensing Laws of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, upon award of the contract. The Contractor and all subcontractors will be obligated to pay wage rates not less that the current CNMI minimum wage, prevailing through the period of contract, as indicated in the web page - http://www.dol.gov/esa/minwage/cnmi/cnmi.htm. The contractor shall be required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. The contractor will also be required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws including the **Davis Bacon Act.**

This project is funded though a grant from the **U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA)** under the **AMERICAN RECOVERY AND REINVESTMENT ACT (ARRA)**. Award of this project is contingent upon receipt of approval from the USEPA.

This project involves the installation of transmission lines to connect direct feed wells from the different villages into water tank storages to meet all federal safe water standards and requirements.

The proposed project will also include the construction of new transmission lines to connect 3 new wells in the Kagman area. For Kagman well field, the work will include control panel enclosure buildings, controls, perimeter security fencing, exterior perimeter slabs, installation of pumps, construction of properly designed wellheads and connecting the wells in to the existing transmission line.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids and waive any imperfection in the bid proposal in the interest of the government.

All technical inquiries should be directed to Capt. Robert Lorenz at telephone number (670) 235-7025 Ext. 148 or Mr. Larry T. Manacop at telephone number (670) 235-7025 Ext. 150 and inquiries regarding procurement should be directed to Mr. Manny B. Sablan, Jr. Procurement & Supply Manager at (670) 235-7025 Ext. 134.

/s/ ABE UTU MALAE
Assistant Executive Director for Operation

/s/ ANTONIO S. MUNA
Executive Director

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
State Board of Education
Public School System
P. O. Box 501370, Saipan, MP 96950

Invitation for Bid
PSS IFB 09-040

"Video and Related Equipment for Marianas High School (MHS)"

The Public School System and the State Board of Education are soliciting competitive sealed bids for the purchase of **Video and Related Equipment for Marianas High School.** The Scope of Work is available beginning December 31, 2009 at the PSS Procurement & Supply Office located on the 3rd floor of the CNMI Retirement Fund building, Capital Hill, Saipan MP 96950

Bids must be placed in a sealed envelope marked **"IFB 09-040"** containing one (1) original with Three (3) copies and submitted to the PSS Procurement & Supply Office situated on the 3rd Floor of the CNMI Retirement Fund Building, Capitol Hill, Saipan, MP 96950, no later than **January 20, 2010 at 10:00 a.m.,** at which time bids, will be publicly opened. Any bids received after the aforementioned date and time will not be accepted.

Questions shall be in writing addressed to Robert Florian, Procurement & Supply Officer or Emailed to the following address: **robert.florian@pss.cnmi.mp**

/S/ Rita A. Sablan, Ed.D.
Commissioner of Education

/S/ Robert Florian
Procurement Officer

PROJECT CHILDSAFE COMES TO NMI AGAIN

1,000 firearm safety kits to be distributed in CNMI

The U.S. Attorney's Office will provide free firearm safety kits to CNMI residents through a partnership with Project ChildSafe, the nationwide firearms safety education program.

The safety kits, which include a gun lock, will be distributed in the NMI as follows:

■ Thursday, Jan. 14: Saipan, Street Market in Garapan, from 6pm to 9pm

■ Friday, Jan. 15: Tinian, Police Station in San Jose, from 2pm to 5pm

■ Saturday, Jan. 16: Saipan, Joeten SuperStore (formerly Price Costco) in San Jose, from 10am to 2pm.

Free gunlock distribution in Rota will be announced later.

The U.S. Attorney's Office said a total of 1,000 gunlocks have been set aside for the CNMI, with 500 for Saipan distribution today, 200 for Tinian on Friday, and 300 for Rota's distribution at a later date.

"We will give out one free gunlock to any adult, no questions asked. However, if an individual would like more than one gunlock, he/she would have to show documentation for each gun and we will provide the gunlocks," said the U.S. Attorney's Office.

Distribution is on a first-come, first-served basis.

Project ChildSafe, a program developed by the National Shooting Sports Foundation, has distributed more than 35 million firearm safety kits throughout the country since 2003. The program is funded by a U.S. Department of Justice grant, with additional funding provided by the firearms industry.

"We encourage residents to pick up a Project ChildSafe safety kit so that they can securely store their firearm," said Lenny Rapadas, U.S. Attorney. "Each kit contains a safety curriculum and a cable-style gun lock. The locks will render safe most types of handguns, rifles and shotguns. The goal is to prevent a child or any other unauthorized person from accessing a firearm in your home."

"We are pleased to have the U.S. Attorney's Office as a Project Childsafe partner," said Bill Brassrd, Jr., director of Project Childsafe. "Project Childsafe is an important step forward in helping ensure that all firearm owners fully understand their responsibilities with respect to the safe handling and storage of firearms."

Other agencies joining the U.S. Attorney's Office are Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives and the CNMI Department of Public Safety. ***(PR)***

US Mint offers CNMI quarter first day cover

The Northern Mariana Islands Official First Day Coin Cover is now available for sale from the U.S. Mint.

WASHINGTON—The U.S. Mint began accepting orders for the Northern Mariana Islands Official First Day Coin Cover on Tuesday, Jan. 12, 2010, and production is limited to 20,000 units.

This limited edition cover represents the final cover released for the District of Columbia and United States Territories Quarters Program.

The Northern Mariana Islands Official First Day Coin Cover contains two CNMI commemorative quarter-dollar coins, one each from the U.S. Mint facilities at Philadelphia and Denver.

The quarters are mounted on a handsome display card with a cancelled 44-cent Flag stamp. The postmark, Nov. 30, 2009, SAIPAN, CNMI, marks the day the coins were first released into circulation.

The CNMI quarter is the sixth and final coin in the 2009 District of Columbia and U.S. Territories Quarters Program. The coin's reverse (tails side) features an image that represents the wealth of the islands in their natural resources of land, air and sea. Near the shore stands a large limestone latte, the supporting column of ancient indigenous Chamorro structures. A canoe of the indigenous Carolinians represents the people's seafaring skills across vast distances. Two white fairy tern birds fly in characteristic synchrony overhead. A Carolinian mwar (head lei) composed of plumeria, langilang (Ylang Ylang), angagha (Peacock Flower) and teibwo (Pacific Basil) borders the bottom of the design near the inscription NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS. The reverse was designed by United States Mint Sculptor-Engraver Phebe Hemphill. ***(U.S. Mint)***

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PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
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REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
RFP10-DEQ-049
SUBMISSION: FEBRUARY 11, 2010 • TIME: 2:00 P.M.
"OFFICE SPACE RENTAL ON SAIPAN FOR THE DIVISION OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY OFFICE"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY IN LOWERBASE DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

A PRE-PROPOSAL MEETING WILL BE HELD ON **FEBRUARY 02, 2010 AT 9:30 A.M.,** AT THE DEQ MAIN CONFERENCE ROOM, SECOND FLOOR GUALO RAI CENTER, GUALO RAI, SAIPAN.

PREFERENCE IS AVAILABLE TO U.S. CITIZENS OR PERMANENT RESIDENTS AS PER PUBLIC LAW 15-95 AND AS FURTHER AMENDED BY PUBLIC LAW 15-118 AND MUST BE SUBMITTED WITH THE PROPOSAL IF PREFERENCE IS CLAIMED.

THE LESSOR MUST COMPLY WITH PUBLIC LAW 15-23, ARTICLE 5, SECTION 8652 (A) - (D).

/s/ **FRANK M. RABAULIMAN**
DIRECTOR OF DEQ

/s/ **HERMAN S. SABLAN**
DIRECTOR, P&S

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Three more NMC graduates pass NCLEX on 1st try

Three recent graduates of the Northern Marianas College recently took and passed the extremely challenging National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses.

Genevieve Bahatan, Ji Sook (Julia) Kim, and Emily Young, all of whom graduated from NMC in May 2009, took the exam in December and passed on their first attempt. They are currently three of eight recent NMC nursing graduates who passed the NCLEX test on their first attempt.

"On behalf of the entire nursing department, I congratulate these students for passing the exam on their first try," said acting Nursing Department chair and instructor, Pasquana Calvo.

The NCLEX tests an individual's nursing knowledge, skills, and abilities essential to the safe and effective practice of nursing at the entry level. The exam is used by nursing boards in all 50 United States and all U.S. territories to award nurse licenses. Licensed nurses may have their credentials endorsed by a state or territory's board upon meeting that board's requirements without having to retake the exam.

"Their accomplishment of such a feat is a testament to their determination to succeed in the medical field," added Calvo.

Northern Marianas College nursing graduates, from left, Genevieve Bahatan, Emily Young, and Ji Sook (Julia) Kim.

As students the three graduates were active members in the college's Nursing Club and donated much of their time and effort into promoting and assisting in the club's many community health Awareness events. After graduation, they jumped straight into studying and reviewing for the NCLEX.

Kim expressed her gratitude toward the NMC nursing instructors who encouraged them, backed them, and assisted them by sacrificing their time and going out of their way to help them become competent future nurses.

Kim and Bahatan are presently seeking to jump start their nursing careers at various clinics and hospitals on the island.

In addition, Bahatan and Young expressed their desire to further their education and develop their skills as nurses. Bahatan eventually wants to specialize in critical care and take advantage of the different opportunities offered in the medical field, while Young has many goals that include becoming a trauma nurse and a forensic medical assistant, and traveling around the world to offer medical assistance to people in remote locations with her husband, who is an emergency medical physician. ***(NMC)***

NMC's program review activities now being tracked electronically

To further strengthen its commitment to program review and assessment, the Northern Marianas College has acquired TracDat, a software that will help the institution track program review and assessment activities electronically. Designed by Nuventive out of Pennsylvania, TRACDAT, is widely used throughout the nation by educational institutions.

Prior to the purchase of TRACDAT, NMC staff and faculty had to manually transmit and develop program review reports for the Office of Institutional Effectiveness, a division under NMC that handles and controls data for the Planning Program Review and Outcomes Assessment Committee.

NMC TracDat Administrator Keane Palacios

Galvin Deleon Guerrero, director of the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and chair of PROAC, said, "It was very tedious and time consuming having to administratively control and organize the reports. TRACDAT will not only improve efficiency and use less paper, but it will also improve the accuracy and precision of reports used for the college's assessment activities."

After the final implementation of TracDat, Deleon Guerrero expects the software to help manage institutional assessment processes, including the assessment of student learning outcomes, by providing a structured framework for continuous quality improvement at the college. A Web-based application, its templates assure uniform reporting that simplifies collection, review, management, and use of data.

TracDat includes programmed reports that enable users to track and review problems and solutions, relate goals and objectives to the institutional mission, and review courses by objectives and assorted data summaries. In addition, it helps track quarterly updates from NMC's Operational Plan or Annual Implementation Plan and relates them to NMC's Key Performance Indicators and other benchmarks.

"Our use of Nuventive's TRACDAT is just one of the many important investments we have made and will continue to make in order to continually improve the quality of the College's programs," said NMC interim president Lorraine Cabrera. ***(NMC)***

BIRTHDAY SHOUTOUT

Happy 18th birthday to Maegan Julia T. Norita! You're not getting any older, you're just getting better! Millions of kisses and love, from your brothers, Cody and Chase Joshua, and sisters Tracy, Baby Hayden, Ashley Ann, and Vicky Jean.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Happy, happy birthday going out to a great mom, grandmother, friend, and co-worker, Tita T. Gabredo, who is celebrating her birthday today, Jan. 14, 2010. Lots of love coming from your two boys, Chris and Marlon, your daughter Cat, your grandson Caleb, the Salbahe familia, and most especially your MHS Dolphin family.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Happy birthday to our beloved mom and grandma Terry Kisa! Wishing you good health, happiness, and more birthdays to come! Lots of love from Ray, Verlyn, Vince, Britney, Vanessa, Shawn and your grandchildren: Vinysha, Trevor, Victoria, Jared, Shalei and Vinson.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

Jan. 14, 1999

Saipan legislators outline poker revenue use

A conflict may be brewing between administration officials and Saipan legislators over some $1.9 million in revenues anticipated to be earned from the recent 33 percent increase in license fees for poker and pachinko slot machines on the island. Members of the Saipan and Northern Islands Legislative Delegation apparently are hoping to set aside the money for the operations and personnel costs of the Office of the Mayor as well as for other community programs initiated by local lawmakers. But the Tenorio administration has identified the poker fees as one source of funds to match federal money provided under the Capital Improvement Projects in a bid to push infrastructure development and help spur the island economy.

CRM uncovers jet ski permit scam

Coastal Resources Management Office Director Felipe Atalig yesterday revealed that several jet ski operators are sub-leasing their license to foreigners for a fee. "Our office learned of unauthorized transaction of subleasing the permits to as much as $3,000 per month to a foreigner," Atalig said, refusing to reveal the identity of the permittee. He added that the same person was granted a permit but did not own any jet ski. The scam was uncovered by the agency after an investigation and review of all jet ski permits, in preparation for the proposed re-allocation of permit applications. Atalig clarified that the permit holder is not subject to any criminal charges but his permit is subject to revocation.

Jan. 14, 2000

CDA delinquency rate climbs to 15 percent

Local businesses continue to crumble from the adverse effects of the worst economic crisis ever to hit the region as manifested in the increasing delinquency rate reported by the Commonwealth Development Authority, the government's lending arm. In an interview, Development Authority Chair John S. Tenorio disclosed the agency's loan payment delinquency rate climbed to 15 percent by end-December 1999. CDA registered a 13 percent delinquency rate by end-1998, which is almost double the figure from the previous year's 7 percent.

House vows to help retire deficit

House Speaker Benigno R. Fitial pledged to work closely with the administration in order to bring down the huge government deficit as well as to improve the financial condition of the Commonwealth. He made this commitment after meeting with finance officials, led by Finance Sec. Lucy DLG. Nielsen and Mike Sablan, the governor's special advisor on finance and budget. Members of his coalition that assumed the House leadership last Monday also attended the meeting. According to House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Antonio Camacho, the talked focused on general issues concerning financial affairs of the government, but did not tackle specific recommendations by the Tenorio administration.

Jan. 14, 2002

Retro wage hike and land payment: 'Resolve or repeal'

The government would need an estimated $89 million to pay off two of its most pressing obligations-the nearly $70 million it owes under the land compensation program and the $19 million it owes in retroactive pay to government workers. With plunging revenues facing the Commonwealth, it has therefore become necessary for the government to determine and decide within this year whether it should repeal the laws that created these problems in the first place, find other ways of paying off these obligations or pay them on a staggered basis. This was stressed by Rep. William S. Torres, who said that, for several years now, the CNMI government and the Legislature have been faced with these predicaments on how to unravel and solve these problems.

The makings of an organized event

The 2002 Inaugural Committee worked whole day yesterday to make sure that today's ceremonies at the American Memorial Park Amphitheater, which will usher in a new administration, will run smoothly as planned. The inauguration of the administration of Gov. Juan N. Babauta and Lt. Gov. Diego T. Benavente will be witnessed by around 200 dignitaries from around Asia, the Pacific and the mainland US. Protocol/Hospitality and Guests Committee Chair Frank S. Rosario said the official oath-taking ceremony is set to start at 10:30am. At least 30 rows of bleachers were added, while separate tents and chairs were set up at both sides of the amphitheater to accommodate the huge crowd, which is anticipated to witness today's event.

Police coordination helps solve bar burglary

Police coordination reportedly helped solve a Dec. 26 burglary at Jonny's Bar and Grill in Garapan.

Police officers' investigation led to the recovery of the stolen items and the arrest of three suspects: Roger Jones Sellem, 23; Jerry Sammy, 18; and Johnny John, 22.

The three suspects, all residents of Upper Miha in Garapan, were arrested for burglary and theft.

Sellem was taken to the Superior Court on Monday. Associate Judge Kenneth Govendo kept the bail at $10,000 cash, as the court had earlier imposed.

Detective Kevin R. Maratita stated in his report that a fellow detective responded to Jonny's Bar and Grill on Dec. 26 after receiving a call at 4:44am that the establishment had been burglarized.

Police learned that the padlock at Jonny's Bar had been cut by means of a bolt cutter. Assorted beers, hard liquor, and a beverage cooler were stolen.

An ATM cash machine was for also forced open, but the suspects failed to get any cash from it.

Maratita said he remembered a patrol officer reporting about seeing a Toyota Corolla car roaming in Garapan prior to the burglary at Jonny's Bar. Maratita said the patrol officer recognized Sammy as one of the passengers of the vehicle.

Maratita said he later spotted the Toyota Corolla being filled with gas at a Mobil station in Garapan, with some Micronesians inside the vehicle.

Maratita followed the vehicle to Upper Miha where he then talked to two of the car's occupants. With the consent of the suspects, he and other detectives searched the inside of the car and found unopened bottles of beer in the rear passenger seat.

In the trunk, detectives saw a cooler containing different brands of beer, a bolt cutter, three bottles of assorted liquor, and a bag of lemons.

Maratita said the owner of Jonny's Bar identified the items as those stolen from the establishment. Police then seized the items. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

Bordallo opposed to use of eminent domain by DoD for land acquisition

WASHINGTON, D.C.— Guam Delegate Madeleine Z. Bordallo is opposed to the idea of allowing the U.S. Department of Defense to use eminent domain as a means to acquire private property from an unwilling landowner in Guam.

In a statement issued yesterday, Bordallo said she would oppose any DoD efforts to use eminent domain to acquire the private property of a landowner who is not interested in leasing or selling their private property.

"On several occasions when I have met with DoD officials I told them that I oppose the use of eminent domain to acquire private property and that this option would not be supported by our leaders and our community," she said. "I have encouraged the DoD to work closely with the Government of Guam and any private landowners to explore mutually agreeable solutions to any land issues."

Bordallo's statement was in response to land acquisition issues that were raised at recent Draft Environmental Impact Statement public hearings in Guam.

She pointed out that any effort by the DoD to use eminent domain for land acquisition would have to be approved by the U.S. Congress and reviewed by the House Armed Services Committee.

"I believe that further dialogue between DoD, our elected leaders, and private landowners will go a long way in finding solutions to military requirements while avoiding use of eminent domain and minimizing the impact to our cultural heritage and environment. I will reiterate my opposition to the use of eminent domain to acquire land in comments that I will submit on the draft EIS," she said. ***(Saipan Tribune)***

US military sets Saipan, Tinian hearings on draft EIS

The Military Integration Management Committee is reminding the public of the Joint Guam Program Office hearings scheduled at Tinian Elementary School today, Jan. 14, and at the Saipan Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe tomorrow, Jan. 15. Each will begin with an Open House from 5pm to 7pm, followed by the public hearings from 7pm to 9pm.

JGPO will be conducting these meetings to discuss the Guam Draft Environmental Impact Statement that was released in November.

MIMC Coordinator Tom Linden will also be on hand at these hearings to field questions and concerns related to the military build-up.

These public hearings will be a great introduction to the EIS, and give the public time to review the document prior to a scheduled public forum held by the MIMC on Jan. 26, 2009, from 5pm to 7pm at the Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe. The draft EIS can be reviewed at www.guambuildupeis.us or at the public libraries on Tinian and Saipan.

The MIMC public forum will also include representatives from the Office of Economic Adjustment and the Advisory Consulting Team from Guam that has been hired to dissect and interpret the 11,000 page report.

On Jan. 26 , the partnership of the MIMC, OEA, and Guam ACT will hold a public hearing at the Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe. The event is sponsored by NMC and IT&E, and it will be broadcast to Tinian and Rota via NMC-VTC. This forum is designed to be more of a user-friendly interpretation, elaboration, and breakdown on what the draft EIS/OEIS means to the CNMI, and to allow people to hear non-military point of view. The public is also encouraged to sends their questions to cnmi.mimc@commerce.gov.mp, no later than Jan. 20. On Jan. 26 itself, ACT will randomly provide answers to some questions that are submitted on time.

The public comment period for the draft EIS ends on Feb. 17, 2010, and due to the sheer volume and complexity of the report, the MIMC encourages the public to take advantage of these opportunities to ask questions and share concerns. ***(MMIC)***

It's National Flu Vaccination Week!

Saipan:

Tinian:

Rota:

THE MORE PEOPLE VACCINATED, THE LESS LIKELY THE FLU WILL SPREAD IN THE COMING MONTHS.

The H1N1 vaccine is safe, effective, and your best defense against the flu this year.

Be safe, Get vaccinated!

CDC
CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
Volume XX, Issue No. 11

Published daily at 2/F JP Centre,
Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, CNMI
Mailing Address: PMB 34, Box 10001, Saipan, MP, 96950

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EDITORIAL

An ally's wobbles

Japan's venture into two-party democracy has not looked pretty so far—especially for those watching from Washington. Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama has pursued an erratic course in both domestic and foreign policy since his Democratic Party took office in September. Most notably, he triggered a dispute with the Obama administration over U.S. military bases in Japan and then violated both public and private promises to resolve it by the end of 2009. Having campaigned against the corruption of 50 years of rule by the Liberal Democratic Party, Mr. Hatoyama also has been dogged by his own fund-raising scandal. Polls show his approval rating has fallen from more than 70 percent to less than 50 percent in just three months.

Like the Japanese public, the Obama administration has not concealed its exasperation. The president and other senior officials visiting the country have repeatedly called for an "expedited" resolution to the base dispute. After the prime minister broke his own deadline just before Christmas and announced that he would postpone the matter for another few months, the Japanese ambassador to Washington was summoned for an unusual demarche by Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton.

The Pentagon says there is good reason for the impatience. Under a 2006 agreement, 8,000 U.S. Marines now based on the Japanese island of Okinawa are to be relocated to Guam, beginning this year. But that move depends on implementation of a bilateral deal to close a helicopter base that now lies in a heavily populated area, and to build new facilities in another area near the island's coast. If Japan does not move forward on the base agreement, U.S. officials have warned, the troop redeployment may be derailed.

Yet the administration must guard against allowing a diplomatic irritation to escalate into a major crisis with the most important U.S. ally in Asia. Though he has catered to Okinawans who oppose the U.S. military presence, and to nationalists calling for a more equal U.S.-Japanese security relationship, Mr. Hatoyama so far appears committed to the alliance. That's not the case with one of two small parties in his coalition—which is pressing for the removal of all U.S. troops from Japan. Then there is the Democratic Party's founder and chief power broker, Ichiro Ozawa, who recently visited Beijing with an entourage of 500, and who favors a deepening of Japanese ties to China.

The chances are that if Mr. Hatoyama heads too far in that direction, he will face a rebellion from his own party, not to mention Japanese voters. So the Obama administration would be wise to avoid harsh rhetoric and give the prime minister some space. The reality is that the government cannot go forward with the new basing agreement before an upper-house election, expected late this summer, without endangering its own existence. Japan's nascent two-party system is a democratic achievement, not a diplomatic nuisance; give it a little time to find its course.

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Facing limits of U.S. power

By TRUDY RUBIN
The Philadelphia Inquirer

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Over the holidays, I worked on a disturbing project. It reminded me that American power abroad is shrinking, even as threats to our security grow. It involved my Iraqi driver, Salam, who went missing months ago. I recently learned that he was in jail and have been trying to get him out.

Salam had been a tipster for U.S. forces regarding the whereabouts of Shiite militiamen who had murdered Sunnis and terrorized his neighborhood in 2007. When U.S. troops turned over security responsibility to Iraqis, the families of some of those thugs used bribes or personal government connections to seek revenge. Thus Salam wound up in jail, and our military can no longer help him get out.

I'll write more on this story when the time is right. But my friend's plight reminds me that our global options have shrunk after nine years of war in Iraq and Afghanistan. For signs of whether we've grasped the new realities, here's what to watch in 2010.

First, Iraq. The United States is scheduled to pull all combat troops out of the country by August 2010, and the remaining troops by 2011. Although violence is way down, car bombs are once again blowing up Iraqi civilians. The political situation is dismal, and corruption is endemic.

Most disturbing, just about every Iraqi friend I speak with by phone expects there will be another military coup after the Americans leave, because Iraqis are so fed up with corruption and political strife.

In 2010, we will see whether the new Iraqi political elite can wake up in time, or whether the country will slip back toward nasty, autocratic rule and barely civil relations with the United States.

Next, Pakistan and Afghanistan, where a U.S. troop surge is under way. I thought the surge was worth a try, to reverse the perception that the Taliban was winning. Only then might it become possible to persuade some Taliban commanders to switch sides and pave the way for a negotiated political solution in Afghanistan.

But developments in recent weeks underline how tough 2010 will be in the region. The double-agent suicide bomber who just killed seven CIA personnel at a base near the Pakistan border showed how sophisticated al-Qaeda and its Taliban associates have become. The fact that so many CIA experts gathered in one place and permitted an informant to enter without being searched is disturbing. This sad episode feeds the image of a Taliban that can run circles around us.

There is talk of CIA revenge, meaning more Predator drone strikes at Taliban militants who hide across the border in Pakistan. But U.S. security personnel must stay focused and keep cool heads. Predator strikes are vital, but they have serious political repercussions in Pakistan, where the public opposes them. Any escalation of drone attacks must be carefully calculated, especially now that the CIA has lost critical expertise.

Regaining the momentum against the Taliban will be hard enough without political calls for rash action. And it won't help to turn the psychological tide in Afghanistan this year if some administration officials insist on publicly hyping a July 2011 exit date—giving the Taliban the sense that they need only wait us out.

Then there's Yemen, the scene of the next potential conflict. "Iraq was yesterday's war. Afghanistan is today's war. If we don't act pre-emptively, Yemen could be our next war. That's the danger we face." That's what Sen. Joe Lieberman, I-Conn., said he was told by a U.S. government official in Sanaa, Yemen.

But we'd better be wary of making Yemen our next war. The sagest advice I've heard from those who know Yemen is that we should continue quietly helping to train Yemenis to go after al-Qaeda, as we've been doing for the past year. We should do this without making such a stir that we rouse Yemen's tribes to support the militants because they oppose American intervention.

As Barbara Bodine, a former U.S. ambassador to Yemen, told the Toronto Star: "If we go in and make this our war, ... it is suddenly going to become a war against us, and we will lose it."

We overreached in Iraq and are struggling in Afghanistan. The last thing we need, at a time of unprecedented military and economic stress, is a third war. 2010 will be a year to reassess our reach and match it to our resources—before we dig any more holes or betray any more people who believed in us, like my friend Salam.

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Leadership accountability

"With great power comes great responsibility."
—Uncle Ben to Peter Parker (Spiderman)

By RIK and JANEL VILLEGAS
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Rik is a business instructor at NMC and Janel is a partner with BizResults, LLC (www.bizresults.org). They can be contacted at biz_results@yahoo.com.

Our 4-year-old son Jason got a red superhero suit for Christmas, complete with cotton-padded pecs, abs, and biceps. After he was zipped into the suit and the cape was added, he transformed into a powerful caped crusader ready to do battle with the forces of evil.

When I tried to take an afternoon nap, Jason decided I was his archenemy. He jumped on the bed and unleashed his super powers with leaping kicks and a swinging rubber sword until I was pummeled into submission. My nap never happened because I couldn't close my eyes for fear that mighty mite was lurking around the corner.

Unfortunately, the world is replete with people who have donned the suit of power and then used it for their self-serving purposes, or like a drunkard, could not handle the power given to them and went out of control. Those who become intoxicated with their power often feel an air of invincibility and do things that are not publicly acceptable. However, power also carries with it responsibility, and its close cousin: accountability. Like a coin, when someone possesses power, the other side has engraved on it the responsibility to do the right things and accountability to accept responsibility for those actions.

Individuals who are elevated into a position of power through votes, promotions, wealth, or fame are often tempted by the power they've inherited. Power allows one to influence people and determine the use of resources. The definition of leadership includes the ability to influence others, and a leader in business, politics, sports, or the home has the power to affect the lives of others.

When leaders engage in activities that are unacceptable, they are held accountable for those actions. If their actions continue, then their ability to influence others is diminished. Politicians are keenly interested in their public approval ratings because they know that their true source of power comes from the people they serve. The endorsements given to sports leaders are also dependent on their approval rating with the public.

A recent case in point comes from the sports arena with the current fiasco surrounding Eldrick Tont Woods, commonly known as "Tiger." Woods had a positive approval rating of 87 percent in 2005. It has dropped to 33 percent, "one of the greatest recorded drops in popularity of any nonpolitical figure," according to *Vanity Fair*. This drop has also cost him major endorsements.

The golfing legend Arnold Palmer forewarned the fledgling star about the responsibilities associated with his meteoric rise in golf after Woods won his first Masters in 1997, at the age of 21. When he complained to Palmer about the responsibilities associated with his fame and wealth, Palmer replied, "You're right, normal 21-year-olds don't have $50 million in the bank. If you want to be normal, give the money back."

Palmer knew that fame, fortune and power carries great responsibility and that it would become Tiger's biggest obstacle to becoming the greatest golfer of all time. Leaders who do not take responsibility become victims, and being a victim is the exact opposite of leadership. Thirteen years later, Tiger has learned that a very public person cannot live a very private life, and we're witnesses that his public fame has led to private shame. Now "Turtle" Woods is feeling tremendous pressure as a victim of his actions and has decided to pull his head into a shell of privacy, probably hoping that all of the media attention will just blow away.

Leaders who engage in acts that are illegal, immoral, or unethical are responsible for those actions and eventually will be held accountable to those they serve and hold them in high esteem. This has been seen with two presidents in the Philippines, who were ousted by the majority of the people who held them accountable for their actions and no longer tolerated their abuse of power.

True leaders accept full responsibility for their actions and hold themselves accountable for the outcome—whether good or bad. Exceptional leaders are not perfect, and they sometimes make poor decisions. However, the difference between them and poor leaders is that they quickly acknowledge their mistakes, apologize and then do everything within their power to right any wrongs without being dragged in front of a tribunal to be held accountable for their actions. Poor leaders who do not accept responsibility or accountability display forced contrition and retribution only after they are brought to justice.

Five myths about terrorists

By JESSICA STERN
Special to The Washington Post

Jessica Stern serves on the Hoover Institution Task Force on National Security and Law and is a lecturer at Harvard Law School. She is the author of Terror in the Name of God: Why Religious Militants Kill.

By now, more than eight years after the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks, we should be better at plucking a terrorist out of an airport security line. After all, we have some idea of what he'll be like: young, socially alienated and deeply religious. And he'll come from a country like Afghanistan, Algeria, Cuba, Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, Libya, Nigeria, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, Syria or Yemen. (Under new Transportation Security Administration rules announced last weekend, people bearing passports from these 14 countries will undergo special scrutiny before boarding a plane.)

Or will he? What if he comes from Northern Virginia, like the five young men who were arrested in Pakistan on Dec. 8 and who have been accused of planning "terrorist activities," according to Pakistani newspaper reports? The bottom line is that we can no longer assume that terrorists will come from any particular country or fit any particular profile. The more we learn about what makes people vulnerable to recruitment by terrorist organizations, the less any of the old generalizations hold up.

1: Most terrorists are spoiled rich kids.

Many prominent jihadists are indeed well off and well educated. Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab, the suspect in the failed Christmas Day airline bombing, comes from one of the wealthiest families in Nigeria. After the 2001 attacks, much was made of the engineering backgrounds of some of the hijackers, and Osama bin Laden famously hails from a wealthy family with close ties to the Saudi royals.

But terrorists come from all socioeconomic backgrounds. For poor people in countries where economic prospects are bleak, jihad can be one of the few jobs available.

Of the 25,000 insurgents and terrorism suspects detained by U.S. forces in Iraq as of 2007, nearly all were previously underemployed, according to Maj. Gen. Douglas Stone, the commander of detainee operations at the time. And according to Christopher Boucek of the Carnegie Endowment, the Saudi Interior Ministry found that most of the 639 convicted terrorists going through a rehabilitation program came from lower- or middle-class families, while 3 percent had high-income backgrounds.

2: Al-Qaida members come from repressive countries in the Middle East.

Al-Qaida's core organization, which was responsible for the Sept. 11 strikes, is now based in Pakistan, but terrorist organizations claiming to be its affiliates include North Africa's al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb, Jemaah Islamiah in Indonesia and al-Shabab, which is fighting in southern Somalia and has been recruiting Westerners.

The organization also has a more amorphous following of independent cells and individuals around the world. It is almost impossible to target or quantify this following because it isn't centralized in any one location. Such self-made terrorists can be found anywhere, even in Fort Hood, Tex.

More broadly, there is no particular political system that reliably promotes or deters terrorism. And democracy is not the cure-all it is often assumed to be. There are many more terrorist incidents in democratic India, for example, than in non-democratic China or Saudi Arabia. (This may be because authoritarian regimes are good at controlling terrorism within their borders.) And economist Alberto Abadie of Harvard University has found that the transition to democracy can be a particularly dangerous period with regard to terrorism—consider the experiences of Spain in the late 1970s, Russia after the fall of communism and Iraq today. Failed and failing states, such as Yemen and Somalia, also make particularly fertile ground for terrorism.

3: Al-Qaida is made up of religious zealots.

To the contrary, rank-and-file terrorists who claim to be motivated by religious ideology often turn out to be ignorant about Islam. The Saudi Interior Ministry has questioned thousands of terrorists in custody about why they turned to violence, and found that the majority did not have much formal religious instruction and had only a limited understanding of Islam. According to Saudi officials, one-quarter of the participants in a rehabilitation program for former jihadis had criminal histories, often for drug-related offenses, whereas only 5 percent had been prayer leaders or had other formal religious roles.

In the Netherlands and elsewhere in Europe, second- and third-generation Muslim youths are rebelling against what they consider the culturally contaminated Islam that their parents practice and that is promoted in their local mosques, favoring instead the allegedly purer Islam that they discover online or via imams from the Middle East. But the form of Islam they turn to is often highly unorthodox. For example, the Hofstad group in the Netherlands—a network of radicalized young Muslims—practiced a sort of do-it-yourself Islam cobbled together from Web sites and the teachings of a self-taught Syrian imam who is also a former drug dealer.

And groups linked to al-Qaida, including in Somalia, have been begun using anti-American hip-hop music or "jihad rap" in their recruitment videos, even though such music is considered counter to the extremist version of Islam promoted by the terror network. Rather than Islam leading young recruits toward al-Qaida, it may be an ignorance of Islam that renders youths vulnerable to al-Qaida's violent ideology.

4: Terrorists are motivated by a strong belief in their cause.

Terrorist movements often arise in reaction to a perceived injustice, whether real or imagined. Yet ideology is not the only, or even the most important, factor in an individual's decision to join. In my research and interviews with terrorists, I have found that operatives are often more interested in adopting a new identity than in supporting a terrorist group's stated goals. Many speak, in particular, about being motivated by a feeling of humiliation. A Kashmiri militant founded his group because, he said, "Muslims have been overpowered by the West. Our ego hurts ... we are not able to live up to our own standards for ourselves."

The reasons that some people become terrorists are as varied as the reasons that others choose conventional professions: market conditions, social networks, contact with recruiters, education and individual preferences. And just as the passion for justice that may animate a young law student is not necessarily what keeps him working long hours at a law firm while hoping to make partner, a terrorist's motivations for staying with his cause can also change.

Most terrorist groups disappear quickly; those that survive tend to have the sort of flexible ideology that can attract a diverse array of recruits and funders. Al-Qaida is among the most disciplined terrorist groups, but its goals and its list of enemies are constantly shifting. Documents analyzed by scholars at the Combating Terrorism Center at the U.S. Military Academy reveal an astonishing lack of clarity about the group's purpose, even among leaders of the organization. Abu'l-Walid, a leading strategic thinker for al-Qaida, has complained about constantly shifting strategic goals, lamenting that "waging jihad like a rhinoceros is stupid and futile."

5: The typical terrorist recruit is an alienated loner.

According to *The Washington Post*, Abdulmutallab, the alleged Christmas airplane attacker, wrote in an online Islamic forum: "I have no one ... to consult, no one to support me and I feel depressed and lonely. I do not know what to do. And then I think this loneliness leads me to other problems."

But for most terrorist recruits, the problem isn't so much a lack of friends as the wrong friends. This dynamic isn't so different from the way gang recruiting works in the United States: Terrorists often join an armed struggle because they have a buddy who has done so. In a survey of 516 Guantanamo detainees, researchers at the Combating Terrorism Center found that knowing another member of al-Qaida was a better predictor of who became a terrorist than was belief in the idea of jihad.

It is interesting to note that in its rehabilitation efforts, the Saudi government tries to compete with convicts' ties to terrorism networks by reconnecting them to their families and home communities, and most controversially, by trying to find wives for the former fighters.

Ultimately, some individuals may join terrorist groups out of a misplaced desire to transform society. But over time, the social and psychological rewards of belonging can eclipse such motivations. Terrorists want to better their own circumstances at least as much as they want to change the world.

The Weather

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY
Partly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲ 86° ▼ 76°	▲ 86° ▼ 76°	▲ 86° ▼ 76°	▲ 86° ▼ 76°	▲ 86° ▼ 76°

Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Showers	▲ 84	▼ 76
Palau	Rain	▲ 86	▼ 78
Yap	Mostly Cloudy	▲ 85	▼ 77
Chuuk	Showers	▲ 89	▼ 80
Pohnpei	Mostly Cloudy	▲ 88	▼ 78
Kosrae	Mostly Cloudy	▲ 87	▼ 76
Majuro	Cloudy	▲ 87	▼ 77

Around The Globe

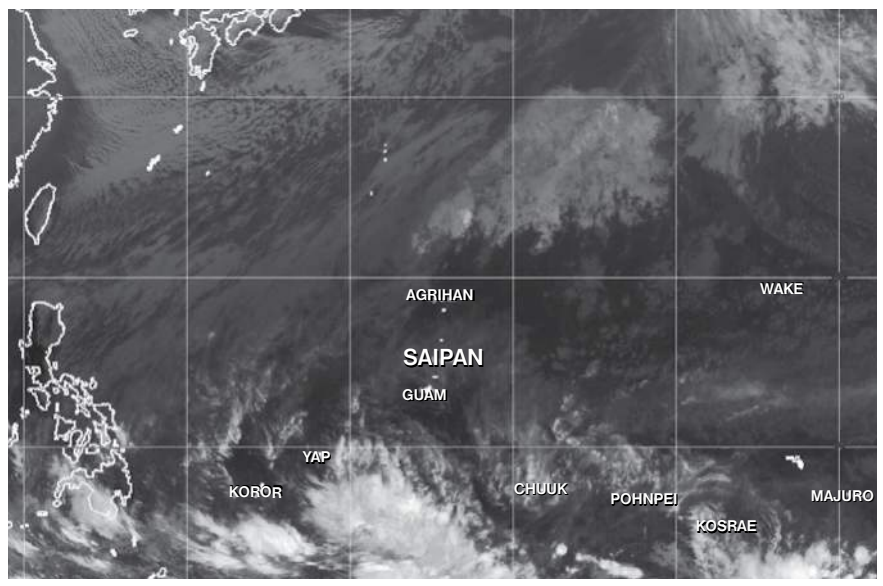
Auckland	Sunny	▲ 69	▼ 61
Beijing	Sunny	▲ 25	▼ 7
Hong Kong	Partly Sunny	▲ 70	▼ 63
Honolulu	Mostly Sunny	▲ 76	▼ 65
London	Partly Sunny	▲ 39	▼ 34
Los Angeles	Sunny	▲ 72	▼ 50
Manila	Rain	▲ 82	▼ 71
Melbourne	Sunny	▲ 75	▼ 57
Miami	Partly Sunny	▲ 73	▼ 62
New York	Sunny	▲ 43	▼ 32
Osaka	Mostly Cloudy	▲ 38	▼ 31
Paris	Dreary	▲ 40	▼ 38
Pusan	Partly Sunny	▲ 38	▼ 27
Rome	Cloudy	▲ 50	▼ 35
Salem	Showers	▲ 82	▼ 68
San Francisco	Partly Sunny	▲ 58	▼ 45
Seoul	Flurries	▲ 23	▼ 14
Tokyo	Partly Sunny	▲ 43	▼ 29
Washington, DC	Sunny	▲ 43	▼ 30

Tides

Saipan Harbor

1:15	AM Today	Low Tide:	0.3 Feet
8:31	AM Today	High Tide:	1.8 Feet
1:38	PM Today	Low Tide:	1.3 Feet
6:16	PM Today	High Tide:	1.8 Feet

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00 WEDNESDAY, JANUARY, 2010

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A cold front extends southwestward from 25N149E to 20N141E then continues as a shear line past 15N130E. Extensive clouds and patchy rain are up to 400 miles northwest of a line from 15N130E to 17N143E to 25N155E. A shear line extends eastward from near Saipan at 15N145E to 12N160E to 12N170E to beyond 180 at 15N. Cloudiness and scattered showers are within 75 miles of the shear line. A near-equatorial trough extends from 4N130E through a circulation near 3N144E to end near EQ150E. Scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms are south of Palau within 100 miles of a line from 3N133E to 3N137E and from southeast of Yap to south of Chuuk in an area from 7N138E to 8N144E to EQ159E to EQ143E back to 7N138E. Trade-wind convergence is triggering scattered showers and a few thunderstorms from southeast of Kosrae to near Butaritari and Tarawa within 100 miles of a line from 1N166E to 3N174E.

Sunrise/Sunset

Thursday	6:47 AM	6:05 PM
Friday	6:47 AM	6:06 PM
Saturday	6:47 AM	6:07 PM
Sunday	6:47 AM	6:07 PM
Monday	6:47 AM	6:08 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Thursday	5:46 AM	5:12 PM
Friday	6:32 AM	6:04 PM
Saturday	7:14 AM	6:54 PM
Sunday	7:52 AM	7: 42 PM
Monday	8:29 AM	8:29 PM

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JANUARY 13, 2009

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-ROTA (ROP)

C09597	11:30am	12:05pm	1, 7

ROTA (ROP)-GUAM

C09597	12:40pm	1:10pm	1, 7

SAIPAN-GUAM

C09317	4:25am	5:15am	Daily
C09313	8:30am	9:20am	Daily
C09597	11:30am	1:10pm	1, 7 via ROP
C09601	12:20pm	1:10pm	4, 5
C09603	3:15pm	4:05pm	Daily
C09605	6:20pm	7:10pm	Daily
C09599	9:20pm	10:10pm	Daily

SAIPAN-NAGOYA (NGO)

NW287	6:00am	7:30pm	1,3,4,5,6,7 via NRT
NW638	8:00am	10:50am	2,3,4,5,6,7

SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)

NW287	6:00am	8:40am	Daily
NW297	4:45pm	7:30pm	Daily
NW289	5:00pm	7:45pm	Daily

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

OZ608	3:20am	6:50am	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)

OZ604	2:10am	6:00am	1
OZ604	2:40am	6:30am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
OZ119	4:00am	11:25am	Daily via Osaka
		Arrive OSA 6:40am, leave OSA 9:30am	
OZ606	3:20pm	7:00pm	2, 4, 6, 7

SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)

FM844	2:50am	5:40am	2, 6

SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN)

CZ3008	3:30am	6:40am	2, 6

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

OZ604/701	2:10am	11:50am	1 via ICN
OZ604/701	2:40am	11:50am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
OZ606/715	3:20pm	11:30pm	7 via ICN
OZ608/705	3:20am	1:30am+1	1, 4, 5, 7 via PUS
C09603/893	3:15pm	9:10pm	3, 5 via GUM-PALAU
C09605/933	6:20pm	9:40pm	Daily via GUM
C09599/PR111	9:20pm	7:50am+1	1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM

SAIPAN-HONG KONG

OZ604/721	2:10am	12:00pm	1 via ICN
OZ604/721	2:40am	12:00pm	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
OZ606/749	3:20pm	11:00pm	4, 6, 7 via ICN

ARRIVALS

ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN

C09598	3:10am	3:45am	5, 6
C09312	1:20pm	1:55pm	6

GUAM-ROTA (ROP)

C09598	2:00am	2:30am	5, 6
C09312	12:10pm	12:40pm	6

GUAM-SAIPAN

C09316	2:00am	2:50am	1, 2, 3, 4, 7
C09598	2:00am	3:45am	5, 6 via ROP
C09596	7:00am	7:50am	Daily
C09600	10:05am	10:55am	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7
C09312	12:10pm	1:55pm	6 via ROP
C09602	1:50pm	2:40pm	1, 4, 5, 7
C09604	4:50pm	5:40pm	Daily
C09606	8:00pm	8:50pm	Daily

NAGOYA (NGO)-SAIPAN

NW288	12:05pm	1:35am+1	1,3,4,5,6,7 via NRT
NW277	8:30pm	1:00am+1	3,6
NW639	9:00pm	1:35am+1	Daily

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

NW290	10:00am	2:35pm	Daily
NW298	10:05am	2:50pm	Daily
NW288	9:0pm	1:35am+1	Daily

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

OZ607	9:00pm	2:10am+1	3, 4, 6, 7

SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN

OZ605	9:00am	2:20pm	2, 4, 6, 7
OZ120	7:10pm	2:20am+1	Daily via Osaka
		Arrive OSA 8:50pm, leave OSA 9:50pm	
OZ603	7:40pm	1:10am+1	7
OZ603	8:10pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN

FM843	7:15pm	1:50am+1	1, 5

GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN

CZ3007	7:30pm	2:40am+1	1, 5

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

OZ716/605	12:30am	2:20pm	4,6 via ICN
OZ706/607	3:35am	2:10am+1	3,4,6,7 via PUS
OZ702/603	1:10pm	1:10am+1	7 via ICN
OZ702/603	1:10pm	1:30am+1 via ICN	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
PR110/C09596	10:10pm	7:50am+1 via GUM	1, 3, 5, 6, 7
C0934/9596	11:10pm	7:50am+1	Daily via GUM
C0892/9596	10:10pm	7:50am+1	3,5 via PALAU-GUM
OZ704/605	11:55pm	2:20pm+1	1, 3, 5, 6 via ICN

HONG KONG-SAIPAN

OZ724/605	12:30am	2:20pm	2,4,6,7 via ICN
OZ750/605	1:00am	2:20pm	2,4,6,7 via ICN
OZ722/603	1:30pm	1:10am+1	7 via ICN
OZ722/603	1:30pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN

Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CO: Continental; FM: Shanghai Airlines; PR: Philippine Airlines; NW: Northwest; OZ: Asiana
ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota			
FRE 100	7:00am	7:30am	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 100	7:50am	8:20am	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 200	9:00am	9:30am	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 200	9:50am	10:15am	Daily
Guam-Rota			
FRE 300	4:00pm	4:30pm	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 300	4:50pm	5:25pm	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 400	6:00pm	6:30pm	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 400	6:45pm	7:15pm	Daily
Saipan-Tinian			
FRE 101	6:45am	6:55am	Daily
FRE 103	7:30am	7:40am	Daily
FRE 105	8:00am	8:10am	Daily
FRE 107	8:40am	8:50am	Daily
FRE 109*	9:10am	9:20am	Daily
FRE 111*	10:45am	10:55am	Daily

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
FRE 113	11:40am	11:50am	Daily
FRE 115	1:00pm	1:10pm	Daily
FRE 117	2:30pm	2:40pm	Daily
FRE 119	4:00pm	4:10pm	Daily
FRE 121	4:40pm	4:50pm	Daily
FRE 123 *	5:40pm	5:50pm	Daily
FRE 125 *	6:00pm	6:10pm	Daily
Tinian-Saipan w/ connecting flights to Rota or Guam**			
FRE 102	7:05am	7:15am	Daily
FRE 104	7:50am	8:00am	Daily
FRE 106**	8:20am	8:30am	Daily
FRE 108**	9:00am	9:10am	Daily
FRE 110	10:00am	10:10am	Daily
FRE 112	11:05am	11:15am	Daily
FRE 114	12:00pm	12:10pm	Daily
FRE 116	1:30pm	1:40pm	Daily
FRE 118	2:50pm	3:00pm	Daily
FRE 120**	4:20pm	4:30pm	Daily
FRE 122**	5:00pm	5:10pm	Daily
FRE 124	6:05pm	6:15pm	Daily
FRE 126	6:20pm	6:30pm	Daily

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The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

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- ISLAND SNAPSHOTS
  Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
- BIRTHDAY GREETINGS
  A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS
  Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMU'T SARI
  Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE
  Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS
  Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
- CAMPUS BULLETIN
  Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

REQUIREMENTS

For pictures:

- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and a phone number.
- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

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- Fax: (670) 235-3740
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- Drop off: 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan
  To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

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- For Travelogue, the *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to choose which pictures to publish.

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Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

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SUBSCRIPTION Published Monday to Saturday, *Saipan Tribune* offers door-to-door on-island delivery at an annual rate of $160. For additional subscription information, call (670) 235-8747 or 235-2769, or fax 235-3740.

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Business

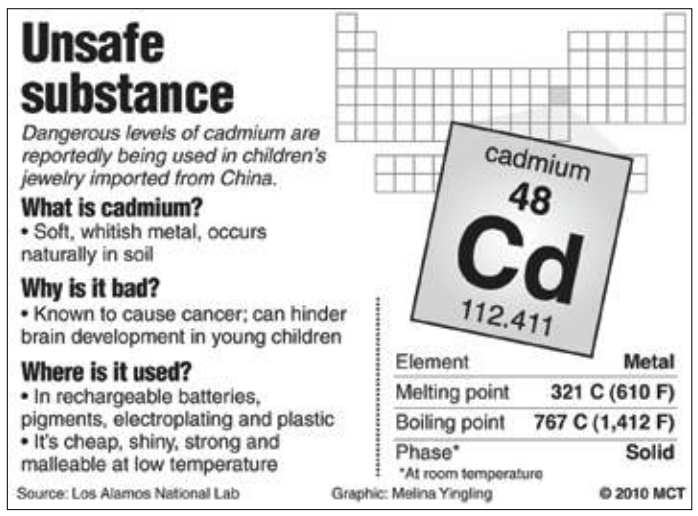
Another chain pulls cadmium-tainted kids' jewelry

LOS ANGELES (AP)—A second international chain store said it is pulling from shelves jewelry that lab tests show contained high levels of the heavy metal cadmium, and Chinese regulators said they will investigate dangerous levels of the toxin in children's jewelry being exported to the United States. Also, a U.S. senator called for hearings.

The jewelry and accessories store Claire's, with nearly 3,000 locations in North America and Europe, on Tuesday joined Wal-Mart Stores Inc. in saying it would stop selling any item cited in an Associated Press investigation of the presence of cadmium in cheap bracelets and charms.

Charms on a "Best Friends" bracelet sold at Claire's contained 89 and 91 percent cadmium, according to testing organized by AP, and shed alarming amounts in a procedure that examined how much cadmium children might be exposed to.

"While we have no reason to believe that this product is unsafe, out of an abundance of caution, we are taking this action because we take our responsibility to our customers very seriously," Claire's said in a statement. Also, customers who return the item will be offered store credit.


Unsafe substance
Dangerous levels of cadmium are reportedly being used in children's jewelry imported from China.
What is cadmium?
• Soft, whitish metal, occurs naturally in soil
Why is it bad?
• Known to cause cancer; can hinder brain development in young children
Where is it used?
• In rechargeable batteries, pigments, electroplating and plastic
• It's cheap, shiny, strong and malleable at low temperature
cadmium
48
Cd
112.411
Element Metal
Melting point 321 C (610 F)
Boiling point 767 C (1,412 F)
Phase* Solid
*At room temperature
Source: Los Alamos National Lab
Graphic: Melina Yingling
© 2010 MCT

Meanwhile, an official with China's product safety agency said it would examine the findings on cadmium contamination.

"We just heard about this, and we will investigate," Wang Xin, a director general for the General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine said Tuesday at a toy safety conference in Hong Kong.

Though Wang does not have the authority to order a full-bore inquiry, his comments were the government's first on the matter and show China's nervousness about potential troubles in the U.S., the biggest Chinese export market.

Also on Tuesday, Sen. Amy Klobuchar, D-Minn., who sits on the Commerce Committee, urged a hearing on cadmium in imported children's jewelry. "There's no excuse - toxic jewelry and toys need to be off our shores and out of our stores," said Klobuchar, who helped engineer stricter legislation on lead in children's products that became law in 2008.

On Monday, Wal-Mart pulled products as politicians in the United States promised new legislation and inquiries. The attorney general of Connecticut promised to investigate suspect costume jewelry. A New York state legislator called for a ban on the sale of children's jewelry with cadmium in the state.

Lab tests conducted for the AP on 103 pieces of low-priced children's jewelry on sale in the U.S. found 12 items with raised levels of cadmium, which can hinder brain development in young children, according to recent research, and is known to cause cancer.

Twelve items had cadmium levels of at least 10 percent by weight. One piece had a startling 91 percent, and others contained more than 80 percent. The government has no restrictions on cadmium in jewelry.

The findings of cadmium contamination come after recalls of products made in China were down significantly in 2009. The decrease followed a string of product quality scandals in 2007 that caused Congress in 2008 to ban toys and other children's products that contain lead—another dangerous and once commonly used material. Cadmium is even more harmful.

A soft, whitish metal that occurs naturally in soil, cadmium is perhaps best known as half of rechargeable nickel-cadmium batteries, but also is used in pigments, electroplating and plastic. Low-cost jewelry makers find cadmium attractive because it is cheap and easy to work with.

Melissa Hill, a spokeswoman for Wal-Mart Stores Inc., called the AP findings "troubling." She said the company, which is the world's largest retailer, had a special responsibility "to take swift action, and we are doing so."

In taped remarks delivered at the toy safety conference in Hong Kong, the chairwoman of the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission urged other countries to ensure that manufacturers do not substitute cadmium, antimony or barium in place of lead in children's products.

Google planning to end China censorship after e-mail breach

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—Google Inc. will stop censoring its search results in China and may pull out of the country completely after discovering that computer hackers had tricked human-rights activists into exposing their e-mail accounts to outsiders.

The change of heart announced Tuesday heralds a major shift for the Internet's search leader, which has repeatedly said it will obey Chinese laws requiring some politically and socially sensitive issues to be blocked from search results available in other countries. The acquiescence had outraged free-speech advocates and even some shareholders, who argued Google's cooperation with China violated the company's "don't be evil" motto.

The criticism had started to sway Google co-founder Sergey Brin, who openly expressed his misgivings about the company's presence in China.

But the tipping point didn't come until Google recently uncovered hacking attacks launched from within China. The apparent goals: breaking into the computers of at least 20 major U.S. companies and gathering personal information about dozens of human rights activists trying to shine a light on China's alleged abuses.

Google spokesman Matt Furman declined to say whether the company suspects the Chinese government may have had a hand in the attacks.

Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton said the Google allegations "raise very serious concerns and questions" and the U.S. is seeking an explanation from the Chinese government.

Google officials also plan to talk to the Chinese government to determine if there is a way the company can still provide unfiltered search results in the country. If an agreement can't be worked out, Google is prepared to leave China four years after creating a search engine bearing China's Web suffix, ".cn" to put itself in a better position to profit from the world's most populous country.

"The decision to review our business operations in China has been incredibly hard, and we know that it will have potentially far-reaching consequences," David Drummond, Google's top lawyer, wrote in a Tuesday blog posting.

A spokesman for the Chinese consulate in San Francisco had no immediate comment.

Abandoning China wouldn't put a big dent in Google's earnings, although it could crimp the company's growth as the country's Internet usage continues to rise. China's Internet audience already has soared from 10 million to nearly 340 million in the past decade.

Google, based in Mountain View, said its Chinese operations account for an "immaterial" amount of its roughly $22 billion in annual revenue. J.P. Morgan analyst Imran Khan had been expecting Google's China revenue to total about $600 million this year.

White House credits stimulus with up to 2M jobs

WASHINGTON (AP)—President Barack Obama is trumpeting a new White House estimate that his top economist calls "stunning": His stimulus plan has already created or saved up to 2 million jobs.

The analysis is part of the administration's quarterly report to Congress on the controversial $787 billion package of spending and tax cuts he signed weeks after taking office.

Obama planned to highlight the report Wednesday during a visit to a Lanham, Md., training center for union electricians that specializes in "green" technology.

Republicans have denounced the stimulus plan as an expensive flop, pointing to a national unemployment rate stuck at 10 percent and December figures showing the economy shed 85,000 more jobs.

But the report from the President's Council of Economic Advisers said the economy is a lot better off than it would have been without the stimulus. Citing its own analysis plus a range of private sector summaries, the council estimated the annual growth rate last year would have been roughly 2 percentage points lower, and there would have been 1.5 million to 2 million fewer jobs.

"That's truly a stunning and important effect", Christina Romer, the council's chairwoman, said in a conference call with reporters. "It has done exactly what we have anticipated it would do."

The report also said over half the stimulus plan's cash and tax breaks have now been spent or otherwise committed. Critics warned the cash would arrive too late to do much good.

On Friday, when the December jobs report was issued, Obama acknowledged a setback.

"The road to recovery is never straight," he told reporters. "We have to work every single day to get our economy moving again."

The president's visit to the training facility in the Washington suburbs is part of a renewed focus on jobs ahead of his State of the Union speech.

While defending the stimulus plan and its impact, Obama has sought to build support for fresh job-creation measures, including tax breaks for hiring, additional public works spending and incentives for weatherizing homes—the so-called Cash for Caulkers program.

Some of these are in the $75 billion Jobs for Main Street Act that the House has already passed. The Senate is expected to take it up soon.

BofA names executive team, looking for new CFO

NEW YORK (AP)—Bank of America Corp. is shuffling its senior management team, moving its chief financial officer over to lead consumer and small business banking and naming a new chief risk officer.

The changes announced Tuesday come as new CEO Brian Moynihan seeks to overhaul the bank and lift it out of the slump caused by the recession and billions of dollars in soured loans.

Bank of America said CFO Joe Price will lead the consumer and small business unit, where he'll be faced with bolstering the company's bread-and-butter business of making loans. BofA lost more than $2.2 billion in the third quarter as bad debt kept rising as consumers lost their jobs and struggled to pay their bills.

The company said it would look outside the company for a replacement for Price, who will take over the job Moynihan had before he succeeded Ken Lewis as CEO on Jan. 1.

Starting Feb. 1, Neil Cotty, the chief accounting officer, will become interim CFO until a replacement is found, the bank said.

Price's appointment caught some analysts by surprise.

"CFO to head of retail is not a usual move, but I know that (Price) is very well thought of by the board," said Nancy Bush, managing member of NAB Research LLC in Annandale, N.J. "Maybe it's a fresh pair of eyes on that business."

As expected Gregory Curl, at one point considered a possible successor to Lewis, was moved out of his role as chief risk officer. Curl wasn't given a specific title, and the bank said he'll focus on "strategic partnerships." It is expected that Curl will soon leave the Charlotte, N.C.-based bank.

Curl is being replaced as chief risk officer by Bruce Thompson, currently managing director of the bank's global capital markets unit. The chief risk officer is in charge of managing the credit and operational risks across the bank's varied businesses.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

SEC expands charges against BofA

WASHINGTON (AP)—Federal regulators have expanded their charges against Bank of America Corp. over billions in bonuses paid at Merrill Lynch, accusing the bank of failing to disclose mounting losses at Merrill before a shareholder vote approving the combination of the two firms. The Securities and Exchange Commission announced Monday it had asked a federal judge in Manhattan to allow it to file the new civil charges against the biggest U.S. bank. But the SEC also said it wouldn't charge any individual Bank of America executives, directors or attorneys because they are not alleged to have "deliberately concealed" information from the bank's outside attorneys or otherwise acted with intent to mislead. Bank of America said it was glad the regulators had found no basis to charge any individuals or to assert a charge of fraud against the bank.

Oil falls below $80 as US inventories jump

SINGAPORE (AP)—Oil prices slid below $80 a barrel Wednesday in Asia after a report showed an unexpected jump in U.S. inventories of distillates and gasoline. Benchmark crude for February delivery was down 89 cents to $79.90 a barrel at midday Singapore time in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. On Monday, the contract fell $1.73 to settle at $80.79. Oil prices rose to a 15-month high near $84 a barrel earlier this week amid expectations a spell of bitter cold in parts of the U.S., Europe and Asia would boost demand for oil distillates such as heating oil.

Weaker Alcoa results, China news drag stocks lower

NEW YORK (AP)—Investors are suffering another bout of pessimism about the strength of the global economic recovery and the health of U.S. banks. Stocks fell sharply Tuesday, sending the Standard & Poor's 500 index down nearly 1 percent. Demand for the safety of Treasurys sent bond prices higher and interest rates lower, tightening the market barometer known as the yield curve. A disappointing profit report from Alcoa Inc. and moves by China to curtail growth raised questions about whether a 10-month surge in stocks can be sustained. At the same time, financial stocks slid on concerns the government would impose taxes on bailed out banks.

Nation

Obama wants $33 billion more for war

WASHINGTON (AP)—The Obama administration plans to ask Congress for an additional $33 billion to fight unpopular wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, on top of a record request for $708 billion for the Defense Department next year, The Associated Press has learned.

The administration also plans to tell Congress next month that its central military objectives for the next four years will include winning the current wars while preventing new ones and that its core missions will include both counterinsurgency and counterterrorism operations.

The administration's Quadrennial Defense Review, the main articulation of U.S. military doctrine, is due to Congress on Feb. 1. Top military commanders were briefed on the document at the Pentagon on Monday and Tuesday. They also received a preview of the administration's budget plans through 2015.

The four-year review outlines six key mission areas and spells out capabilities and goals the Pentagon wants to develop. The pilotless drones used for surveillance and attack missions in Afghanistan and Pakistan are a priority, with a goal of speeding up the purchase of new Reaper drones and expansion of Predator and Reaper drone flights through 2013.

Obama

The extra $33 billion in 2010 would mostly go toward the expansion of the war in Afghanistan. Obama ordered an extra 30,000 troops for that war as part of an overhaul of the war strategy late last year.

The request for that additional funding will be sent to Congress at the same time as the record spending request for next year, making war funding an especially difficult pill for some of Obama's Democratic allies.

Military officials have suggested that the 2011 request would top $700 billion for the first time, but the precise figure has not been made public.

U.S. officials outlined the coming requests on condition of anonymity because the budget request will not be sent to Congress until later this month.

Obama's request for more war spending is likely to receive support on Capitol Hill, where Republicans will join moderate Democrats to pass the bill.

But the budget debate is also likely to expose a widening rift between Obama's administration—it sees more troops and money as necessary to winning the war—and Democratic leaders, who have watched public opinion turn against the military campaign.

Historian: Prop 8 played on anti-gay stereotypes

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—A Yale professor testifying in a case challenging California's same-sex marriage ban said Tuesday that the 2008 campaign to pass Proposition 8 played on stereotypes historically used to portray "homosexuals as perverts who pray on young children, out to entice straight people into sick behavior."

George Chauncey, a historian who specializes in the subject of 20th century gay life, was the second expert witness to appear for two couples unable to marry because of the state's voter-approved gay marriage ban. Their lawsuit has led to the first federal trial to decide the constitutionality of laws limiting marriage to a man and a woman.

After viewing several television commercials produced by Proposition 8's sponsors, Chauncey said images and language suggesting the ballot initiative was needed to "protect children" were reminiscent of earlier efforts to "demonize" gays, ranging from police raids on gay bars during the 1950s to campaigns to rid public schools of gay teachers in the 1970s.

"You have a pretty strong echo of this idea that simple exposure to gay people and their relationships is somehow going to lead a whole generation of young kids to become gay," Chauncey said. "The underlying message here is something about the undesirability of homosexuals, that we don't want our children to become this way."

Chauncey's views were introduced to help persuade Chief U.S. Judge Vaughn R. Walker, who is hearing the case without a jury, that the California measure unlawfully discriminates against gays because it was based on an underlying hatred or moral disapproval and serves no legitimate public aim.

Court concluded with a lawyer for Proposition 8's backers just beginning to cross-examine Chauncey, who is scheduled to resume his testimony on Wednesday.

Earlier Tuesday, another history professor, Nancy Cott of Harvard University, presented a centuries-old history lesson on government regulation of marriage, even touching on President Bill Clinton's indiscretions to argue that the institution has evolved dramatically over time.

In her second day of testimony, Cott disputed a statement by a defense lawyer that states have a compelling interest to restrict marriage to heterosexual couples for the sake of procreation.

Terror conspirator Padilla wants conviction thrown out

ATLANTA (AP)—Convicted terrorism plotter Jose Padilla's attorneys asked an appeals court on Tuesday to throw out his conviction, arguing that he was the victim of "outrageous governmental conduct."

Padilla gained notoriety when he was accused in 2002 of plotting to blow up a radioactive "dirty bomb," though those claims were eventually dropped. He was later convicted along with two others in an unrelated terrorism plot.

Padilla

Padilla's lawyer told the 11th Circuit Court of Appeals that his client should have been granted an evidentiary hearing before the 2007 trial that would have proved he was being mistreated by the government.

Lawyers for Padilla and his co-conspirators also argued that a federal judge made a series of errors that helped lead the jury toward a guilty conviction.

Prosecutors, meanwhile, contended that Padilla's prison sentence of more than 17 years was too lenient.

Padilla and co-conspirators Adham Amin Hassoun and Kifah Wael Jayyousi were convicted in 2007 after a three-month trial in which prosecutors said they sent money, recruits and supplies to Islamic extremist groups.

Padilla, a U.S. citizen and Muslim convert, had been arrested in 2002 at Chicago's O'Hare International Airport on suspicion of plotting to set off a radioactive "dirty bomb," and then held for 3 1/2 years as an enemy combatant without charge.

Where gays can marry

Portugal is on track to become the eighth nation to legalize same-sex marriage.

Containers of explosive damaged; NC port shut down

MOREHEAD CITY, N.C. (AP)—Officials lifted a voluntary evacuation order and opened roads late Tuesday around a busy North Carolina port that remained closed after a forklift operator accidentally punctured containers of the same explosive used in a Christmas Day airline bombing attempt.

Workers were cleaning the spill of pentaerythritol tetranitrate. None of the highly explosive substance got into the adjacent water at the port of Morehead City, officials said.

"The hazard is not as strong as it was earlier today," said Jo Ann Smith, Carteret County Emergency Services Director. She said the port was expected to reopen by Wednesday morning.

Port police knew the shipment of PETN was coming from overseas and had extra security in place, Morehead City Fire Chief Wes Lail said. He would not say where it came from or who imported the chemical. U.S. Coast Guard Chief Petty Officer Mike Hvozda said the ship's last port of call was in Spain, but he was not sure what city.

No injuries were reported and officials did not count how many people left.

PETN was part of a device authorities say a Nigerian man used to try to bring down a Detroit-bound Northwest flight on Christmas Day. It is often used in military explosives and found inside blasting caps. It is also the primary ingredient in detonating cords used for industrial explosions.

A company called Maxam UEB shipped the PETN, said Karen Fox, a spokeswoman for the North Carolina State Ports Authority, but she did not know where in the U.S. it was headed.

According to business directories, Maxam is an explosives manufacturer based in the town of Galdakao, near Bilbao, in Spain's northern Basque country.

The company's Web site is down, though the small portion that does come up also identifies it as an explosives manufacturer.

Morehead City Mayor Jerry Jones said the damage appeared to be an accident and there were no concerns about terrorism. He said a dock worker punctured the containers as he was unloading them.

ACROSS THE NATION

Unhappy meal: Woman charged in McDonald's rampage

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP)—A woman has been charged with trashing a McDonald's restaurant in Missouri because she was unhappy with her cheeseburger. Police said they received many tips after releasing video of the Dec. 27 incident. In the video, which has been viewed hundreds of thousands of times online, a customer is seen throwing a sign and a water dispenser over a counter and pushing three cash registers to the floor. On Tuesday, the Jackson County prosecutor's office charged 19-year-old Alesha McMullen of Kansas City with Class D felony property damage. It wasn't immediately known if McMullen has an attorney. A phone listing for her could not be found.

Fort Hood troops ordered to Afghanistan

WASHINGTON (AP)—The Pentagon has ordered 3,100 troops, mostly based in Fort Hood, Texas, to deploy to Afghanistan as part of President Barack Obama's plan to beef up U.S. forces there. Defense Department spokesman Bryan Whitman said Tuesday the 4th Combat Aviation Brigade of the 4th Infantry Division should arrive in summer. The 2,600 soldiers assigned to the brigade will be accompanied by about 500 support troops. Obama is sending 30,000 more troops to Afghanistan with the expectation that U.S. troops would start leaving by July 2011. About 25,000 troops have been given deployment orders. Fort Hood was the site of shootings last November that killed 13. An Army psychiatrist, Maj. Nidal Hasan, has been charged in the case.

Former worker who shot 2 at Texas ranch executed

HUNTSVILLE, Texas (AP)—Convicted killer Gary Johnson was executed Tuesday for fatally shooting a ranch foreman and another man who interrupted his burglary of a southeast Texas ranch nearly 24 years ago. Johnson, 59, was the second inmate to receive lethal injection this year in the state that executes the most prisoners. At least six others have execution dates scheduled for the coming months. He was condemned for the April 1986 slayings of James Hazelton, 28, and Hazelton's brother-in-law, Peter Sparagana, 23. The two were gunned down while investigating a call from a neighbor who reported intruders had driven through a chained gate at the Triple Creek Ranch about 10 miles west of Huntsville.

Asia

RP massacre witness implicates suspects

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—The first witness to testify against a powerful clan member accused of leading a pre-election massacre of 57 people in the southern Philippines said Wednesday he saw the defendant and his family firing guns as victims knelt and begged for their lives.

The testimony came on the second day of the murder trial of Andal Ampatuan Jr., the top suspect in the Nov. 23 killings of journalists, relatives and supporters of a rival who was challenging Ampatuan for the governorship of Maguindanao province in May elections.

Ampatuan, the only one indicted so far in the deaths, has pleaded innocent to murder charges. His father, clan patriarch Andal Ampatuan Sr., and several other close relatives have been implicated but not formally charged in the killings. They also face separate charges of rebellion.

Rasul Sangki, vice mayor of Ampatuan township, told the court he witnessed the killings after Ampatuan summoned him to a road checkpoint where police officers stopped the caravan in which the victims were traveling.

"I went with him because I was scared," Sangki said. "If I did not follow him, he might get mad at our family. He is feared in our province."

He said the victims were ordered at gunpoint to lay face-down and then were divested of money, cell phones and TV cameras.

They were then herded back into their cars and led to a hilltop clearing several miles (kilometers) away, Sangki said.

Sangki testified that he heard Ampatuan speak to someone on a radio, saying "Father, they are here." The voice on the other end replied, "You know what to do," Sangki told the court.

As gunshots rang out, the victims pleaded for their lives and women screamed. One of the journalists pleaded with Ampatuan to spare his life, Sangki said. Armed with a shotgun, Ampatuan shot him as well as the sister and wife of his election rival, Esmael Mangudadatu.

"They finished them to make sure they were dead," Sangki testified.

Following the slaughter, Sangki said that Ampatuan told him to return to the checkpoint "and tell the people they saw and heard nothing."

AP

Suspect Andal Ampatuan Jr., center, is escorted by members of the National Bureau of Investigation during his trial at the heavily guarded Philippine National Police headquarters in suburban Quezon City, north of Manila, Philippines, Wednesday, Jan. 13, 2010.

Afghan officials: 6 killed in Quran protest

KABUL (AP)—Protesters claiming that international troops destroyed copies of the Quran clashed with Afghan and foreign security forces Tuesday, leaving six people dead, Afghan officials said.

Also in the south, 13 insurgents were killed by a missile that international forces fired from an unmanned drone, NATO said.

A protest of about 2,000 people in Helmand province's Garmsir district turned violent as demonstrators fought with security forces, leaving six civilians dead, according to the top official in the province, Abdullah Barak. Provincial spokesman Daoud Ahmadi confirmed six dead but did not say if they were civilians.

NATO said only one person was killed during the protest—an insurgent sniper who allegedly shot at an Afghan official and was killed by NATO troops.

A NATO spokesman denied that the foreign troops desecrated any copies of Islam's holy book in Sunday's operation with Afghan forces in Garmsir. Lt. Nico Melendez said no shots were fired, and no property was damaged.

"We take such allegations very seriously and would support a combined investigation with local Afghan authorities," he said.

Afghanistan is a Muslim nation where blasphemy of Muhammad and the Quran is considered a serious crime that is punishable by death.

Similar allegations that U.S. troops desecrated the Quran during an operation in October in Wardak province also sparked protests. U.S. and Afghan authorities denied the allegation, insisting that the Taliban are spreading the rumor to stir up public anger.

Tensions have intensified in southern Afghanistan as U.S. and other foreign troops step up their efforts to rout the Taliban.

Coalition troops saw a group of insurgents near a safe house preparing ammunition as well as insurgent mortar teams moving equipment in the Naw Zad area of Helmand province, NATO said. The international force launched one missile, killing the 13 militants.

On Monday, another missile fired from an unmanned aircraft killed three insurgents farther south in the Nad Ali district of Helmand, according to NATO.

WHO survey: Half of China's births are C-sections

HANOI, Vietnam (AP)—Nearly half of all births in China are delivered by cesarean section, the world's highest rate, according to a survey by the World Health Organization—a shift toward modernization that isn't necessarily a good thing.

The boom in unnecessary surgeries is jeopardizing women's health, the U.N. health agency warned in the report published online Tuesday in the medical journal The Lancet.

Unnecessary C-sections are costlier than natural births and raise the risk of complications for the mother, said the report surveying nine Asian nations. It noted C-sections have reached "epidemic proportions" in many countries worldwide.

The most dramatic findings were in China, where 46 percent of births reviewed were C-sections—a quarter of them not medically necessary, the report said.

"So many pregnant women ask for a cesarean birth in China, but we always suggest that they have a natural birth," said Dr. He Yuanhua, at Capital Antai Obstetrics and Gynecology Hospital in Beijing, who did not participate in the study.

"It's bad to have so many cesarean births because natural birth is the ideal way."

The WHO, which reviewed nearly 110,000 births across Asia in 2007-2008, found 27 percent were done under the knife, partially motivated by hospitals eager to make more money.

That mirrors similar results reported by WHO in 2005 from Latin America, where 35 percent of pregnant women surveyed were delivering by C-section.

In the U.S., where C-sections are at an all-time high of 31 percent, the surgery is often performed on older expectant mothers, during multiple births or simply because patients request it or doctors fear malpractice lawsuits. A government panel warned against elective C-sections in 2006.

"The relative safety of the operation leads people to think it's as safe as vaginal birth," said Dr. A. Metin Gulmezoglu, who co-authored the Asia report. "That's unlikely to be the case."

China again warns against arms sales to Taiwan

BEIJING (AP)—China again expressed its opposition to arms sales to Taiwan on Wednesday—the latest in a series of warnings over recent U.S. government contracts with Raytheon Company and Lockheed Martin Corp. for Taiwan-bound weapons.

"The stand we take in opposing any country selling arms to Taiwan has been consistent and clear," the spokesman for the State Council's Taiwan Affairs Office, Yang Yi, told a news conference.

Officials from the defense and foreign ministries have already publicly opposed the U.S. contracts, warning they could hurt China-U.S. relations.

Communist-ruled China split with Taiwan amid civil war in 1949 and continues to regard the self-governing democracy as part of its territory.

China sees arms sales to Taiwan as interference in Beijing's internal affairs and has frequent diplomatic spats with the United States, which pledged to provide Taiwan with the means to defend itself in 1979.

In recent weeks, the United States awarded a $969 million contract to Lockheed Martin for the provision of 263 PAC-3 air defense missiles to Taiwan and a $1.1 billion contract to Raytheon Co. for production of the Patriot Air and Missile Defense System for Taiwan.

Arms sales to Taiwan are driven by threats from China to use force to bring the island under its control, backed up by an estimated 1,300 Chinese ballistic missiles positioned along the Taiwan Strait.

ASIAN BRIEFS

Pakistan: Train, bus crash in fog, 8 children die

MULTAN, Pakistan (AP)—A passenger train hit a school bus at an ungated railroad crossing in Pakistan's east amid dense fog Wednesday, killing at least eight children and the bus driver, police said. Twelve children also were injured in the collision near the Punjab province town of Mian Channu, and some were in serious condition, police official Mohammed Farooq said. There were no known casualties on the passenger train. Parts of Pakistan are currently under the grip of heavy fog which has caused several road accidents.

Gunman kills 2, wounds 1 in Japanese bar shooting

TOKYO (AP)—A man opened fire at a bar in western Japan on Tuesday, killing two people and wounding one seriously before taking his own life. Guns are strictly controlled in Japan, and shootings are rare. When such attacks do occur, they are often linked to gangsters known as yakuza. Police in Habikino City in Osaka prefecture were investigating the gunman's motive, police official Mitsuyuki Oda said. The Kyodo News agency said the gunman was a city employee and could have been targeting his mother-in-law as a result of a family dispute. Police are trying to confirm if an elderly women who was killed was a relative of the gunman. Both the elderly woman and a man in his 20s were pronounced dead at a hospital. A man in his 50s is in critical condition, Oda said.

Fiji regime bans church conference until 2014

SUVA, Fiji (AP)—Fiji's military-led government banned the country's powerful Methodist Church on Wednesday from holding their annual conference until 2014, accusing church ministers of spying on the nation's military for the government ousted in a 2006 coup. Wednesday's move follows a ban last May on the 2009 conference and the arrest of eight senior Methodist leaders after the regime accused them of pursuing a political agenda to destabilize the government. The government also accused the church of being in breach of the regime's Public Emergency Regulation that bans meetings and protests not approved by authorities.

World

WORLD BRIEFS

Yemen: Suspected al-Qaida figure killed in raid

SAN'A, Yemen (AP)—A Yemeni governor says security forces killed a suspected al-Qaida figure in a raid in a remote mountainous province. Security officials also say two members of the security forces were killed and four wounded when suspected al-Qaida fighters attacked their patrol Wednesday elsewhere in Shabwa province, east of the capital. Shabwa's governor, Ali Ahmadi, says the militant, Abdullah Mizhar, was killed Tuesday night in the raid on a house in the Maysaa region. Ahmadi says Mizhar was the leader of a local group of al-Qaida fighters. Security officials say four others with Mizhar were arrested, while the rest fled. The officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to talk to the press.

Bomb plot against ministries in Baghdad thwarted

BAGHDAD (AP)—Iraqi forces seized a large cache of explosives and arrested suspected insurgents allegedly planning to target government ministries Tuesday, in a crackdown across the capital that brought parts of the city to a standstill. The security measures demonstrated the ever-present fear that insurgents will carry out more bombings, like the ones against government buildings in past months that killed hundreds, ahead of the March elections. The government's announcement that it had arrested 25 suspects and seized 880 pounds (400 kilograms) of military grade explosives also set off bitter accusations from some Sunni politicians that the government had exaggerated the incident to burnish its security credentials.

Venezuela announces nationwide energy rationing

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP)—Venezuela's government imposed rolling blackouts of up to four hours every other day throughout the country on Tuesday to combat an energy crisis. President Hugo Chavez has said rationing is necessary to prevent water levels in Guri Dam—the cornerstone of Venezuela's energy system—from falling to critical lows and causing a widespread power collapse. Drought has cut the flow of water into the dam, which feeds three hydroelectric plants that supply 73 percent of Venezuela's electricity. "This plan is going to be implemented troughout the country," Electricity Minister Angel Rodriguez said. "In some places, it will be four hours, in others it will be three hours."

Major quake hits Haiti; many casualties expected

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP)—A powerful earthquake struck Haiti's capital on Tuesday with withering force, toppling everything from simple shacks to the ornate National Palace. The dead and injured lay in the streets even as strong aftershocks rippled through the impoverished Caribbean country.

Associated Press journalists based in Port-au-Prince said the damage from the quake—the most powerful to hit Haiti in more than 200 years—is staggering even in a country accustomed to tragedy and disaster. Thousands of people gathered in public squares late into the night, singing hymns and weeping.

Many gravely injured people sat in the streets early Wednesday, pleading for doctors. With almost no emergency services to speak of, the surivors had few other options.

The scope of the disaster remained unclear early Wednesday, and even a rough estimate of the number of casualties was impossible. But it was clear from a tour of the capital that tens of thousands of people had lost their homes and that many had perished. Many buildings in Haiti are flimsy and dangerous even under normal conditions.

"The hospitals cannot handle all these victims," said Louis-Gerard Gilles, a doctor and former senator, as he helped survivors. "Haiti needs to pray. We all need to pray together."

An Associated Press videographer saw a wrecked hospital where people screamed for help in Petionville, a hillside Port-au-Prince district that is home to many diplomats and wealthy Haitians as well as many poor people.

The headquarters of the 9,000-member Haiti peacekeeping mission and other U.N. installations were seriously damaged, according to Alain Le Roy, the U.N. peacekeeping chief in New York.

"Contacts with the U.N. on the ground have been severely hampered," Le Roy said in a statement, adding: "For the moment, a large number of personnel remain unaccounted for."

Despite the destruction, the capital was largely peaceful.

The 7.0-magnitude quake struck at 4:53 p.m. Tuesday, leaving large numbers of people unaccounted for, including many of the United Nations personnel who have been keeping the peace in the country since a 2004 rebellion ousted the president.

President Rene Preval and his wife survived the earthquake, according to Robert Manuel, Haiti's ambassador to Mexico. He said he had no other details.

Karel Zelenka, a Catholic Relief Services representative in Port-au-Prince, told U.S. colleagues before phone service failed that "there must be thousands of people dead," according to a spokeswoman for the aid group, Sara Fajardo.

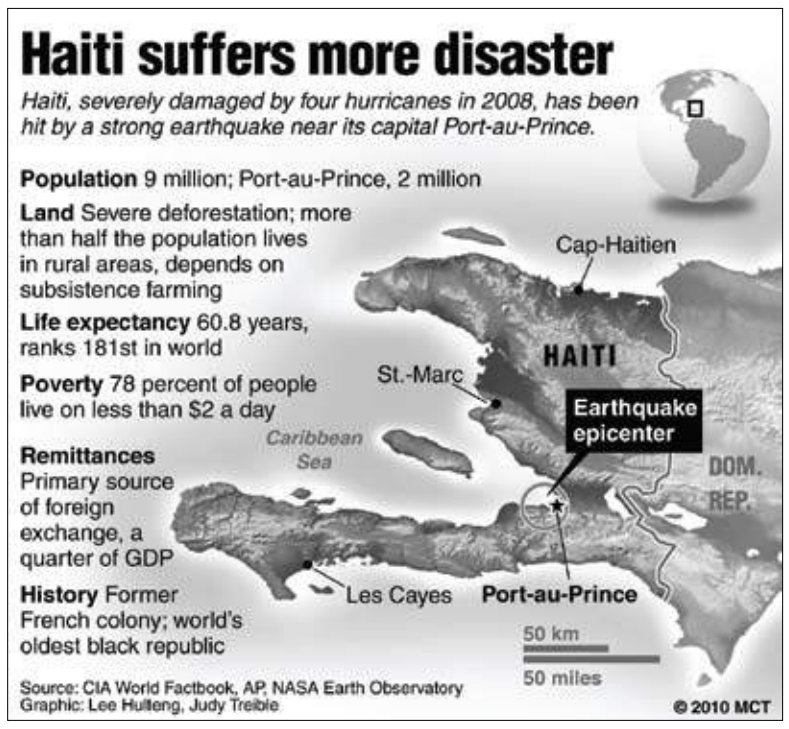
"He reported that it was just total disaster and chaos, that there were clouds of dust surrounding Port-au-Prince," Fajardo said from the group's offices in Maryland.

State Department spokesman P.J. Crowley said in Washington that U.S. Embassy personnel were "literally in the dark" after power failed.

"They reported structures down. They reported a lot of walls down. They did see a number of bodies in the street and on the sidewalk that had been hit by debris. So clearly, there's going to be serious loss of life in this," he said.

The Diocese of Norwich, Connecticut, said at least two Americans working at its Haitian aid mission were believed trapped in rubble.

With phone service erratic, much of the early communication came from social media such as Twitter. Richard Morse, a well-known musician who manages the famed Olafson Hotel, kept up a stream of dispatches on the aftershocks and damage reports. The news, based mostly on second-hand reports and photos, was disturbing, with people screaming in fear and roads blocked with debris. Belair, a slum even in the best of times, was said to be "a broken mess."


Haiti suffers more disaster
Haiti, severely damaged by four hurricanes in 2008, has been hit by a strong earthquake near its capital Port-au-Prince.
Population 9 million; Port-au-Prince, 2 million
Land Severe deforestation; more than half the population lives in rural areas, depends on subsistence farming
Life expectancy 60.8 years, ranks 181st in world
Poverty 78 percent of people live on less than $2 a day
Remittances Primary source of foreign exchange, a quarter of GDP
History Former French colony; world's oldest black republic
Cap-Haitien
HAITI
St.-Marc
Earthquake epicenter
Caribbean Sea
DOM. REP.
Les Cayes
Port-au-Prince
50 km
50 miles
Source: CIA World Factbook, AP, NASA Earth Observatory
Graphic: Lee Hulteng, Judy Treible
© 2010 MCT

Iran blames US, Israel after bomb kills physicist

TEHRAN, Iran (AP)—A senior physics professor who publicly backed Iran's opposition leader was killed when a bomb-rigged motorcycle exploded as he left for work Tuesday. The government blamed the U.S. and Israel for the attack.

The blast apparently was set off by a remote trigger, but it was unclear why the professor was targeted. The victim was a 50-year-old researcher with no prominent political voice, no published work with military relevance and no declared links to Iran's nuclear program.

Hard-line backers of the Islamic system have urged stronger measures to try to crush and intimidate anti-government forces. But the Tehran University professor, Masoud Ali Mohammadi, was far from a front-row political player.

He joined a list of 240 faculty members in a declaration supporting opposition candidate Mir Hossein Mousavi before June's disputed presidential election, but did not take any known high-profile role in the protests after the vote.

The attack was an oddity in Tehran, where such targeted bombings are rare.

"There's a lot of conflicting and confusing aspects to this," said Mehrzad Boroujerdi, an Iranian affairs expert at Syracuse University. "About the only thing we can probably say is that this may bring lots more pressure on the opposition."

Iran's leadership immediately blamed an armed Iranian opposition group that it said operated under the direction of Israel and the United States. The Web site of Iran's presidential office said President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad ordered an investigation into foreign involvement in the bombing.

In Washington, State Department spokesman Mark Toner said: "Any charges of U.S. involvement are absurd." A U.S. intelligence official said the CIA played no role in the bombing death, speaking on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to speak publicly on the matter.

Israel's Foreign Ministry had no comment.

It is the third mysterious incident involving an Iranian scientist in recent years.

Researcher Shahram Amiri disappeared in June while on a pilgrimage to Saudi Arabia, raising questions about whether he defected and gave the West information on Iran's nuclear program. Amiri worked at a university linked to the Revolutionary Guard and his wife said he was researching medical uses of nuclear technology at a university.

Iran's foreign minister accused the U.S. of helping to kidnap him and demanded his return.

In 2007, state TV reported that another nuclear scientist, Ardeshir Hosseinpour, died from gas poisoning. A one-week delay in the reporting of his death prompted speculation about the cause, including that Israel's Mossad spy agency was to blame.

Mexico drug kingpin arrest highlights new strategy

TIJUANA, Mexico (AP)—Federal troops stormed a seaside vacation home and captured one of the country's most brutal drug lords Tuesday, the second time in less than a month that Mexico has taken down one of its most powerful traffickers.

The arrest was considered another victory for enhanced surveillance techniques that are being cultivated with the assistance of the United States. American anti-drug officials had been helping Mexican authorities track Teodoro Garcia Simental for more than five months.

Garcia, known as "El Teo," was arrested before dawn near the southern tip of the Baja California peninsula, where his gang had been bringing in planeloads of drugs to smuggle across the U.S. border, said Ramon Eduardo Pequeno, head of the federal police's anti-drug unit.

Garcia, in his mid-30s, is connected to the deaths of at least 300 people, authorities say, and ordered his rivals disposed of in especially grisly ways: beheading them, hanging their bodies from bridges or dissolving them in caustic soda. He took hefty ransom payments from kidnapping Tijuana business leaders.

He is also believed to be behind many of the dozens of assassinations of Tijuana police officers over the last two years. Pequeno said Garcia had recently stepped up efforts to kill Baja California's attorney general, Rommel Moreno, and Tijuana's public safety chief, Julian Leyzaola.

President Felipe Calderon launched an all-out war upon taking office in December 2006, sending thousands of troops out to combat the drug gangs. But until recently the government had little success in taking down the top kingpins, and Mexicans have been growing increasingly frustrated with a war that has left more than 15,000 casualties.

That changed on Dec. 16, when another drug lord, Arturo Beltran Leyva, was killed in a raid by Mexican marines in the colonial city of Cuernavaca, just south of Mexico City. Authorities said U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration officials had been helping them track Beltran Leyva as well. On Jan. 2, federal officials arrested his brother, Carlos Beltran Leyva.

"The government is being more subtle with regard to its pursuit of drug traffickers," said George W. Grayson, a Mexico expert at the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, Virginia. "It's relying much more on electronic techniques, eavesdropping, inspection of one's lifestyle. It's also paying pretty good money to informants."

U.S. Ambassador Carlos Pascual said Garcia's arrest shows the sharing of information between U.S. and Mexican law enforcement is producing results.

"Mexico's operational capacity is growing," Pascual said in a statement. "We continue to improve our sharing of information. The Mexican government is unrelenting in its determination and commitment."

Environment

First 100 customers at 99 Cents to get eco-bags

A hundred reusable (eco) bags will be given to customers at 99 Cents Supermarket on Friday, Jan. 15, starting at 12:30pm (Note: Not exactly the same bag as shown in this picture.)

As part of the Green Business Initiative—a campaign to inspire environmentally friendly habits among businesses and consumers—100 reusable (eco) bags will be given to customers at 99 Cents Supermarket on Friday, Jan. 15, starting at 12:30pm.

"Got Bag?" reminder stickers will also be made available to interested consumers. These stickers were created to help people adopt a habit of bringing and using their bags regularly.

The Green Business Initiative aims to promote greener choices, habits and lifestyles. One of its goals is to help reduce the amount of plastic grocery bags that end up in the ocean by promoting the long-term use of reusable bags in the community.

The Initiative also aims to partner with local businesses to encourage the use of reusable bags, and also raise awareness about consumer-related environmental issues.

GBI is a combined effort of businesses, community groups and government agencies, including the Division of Environmental Quality and Coastal Resources Management Office. ***(PR)***

Common herbicide might affect frogs

By MARGARET SHAPIRO
(C) 2010, THE WASHINGTON POST

One of the herbicides most widely used to fight a broad range of weeds in cornfields and on other cropland appears to affect the sexual development of frogs when it gets into the waterways in which they live, according to researchers at the University of Ottawa.

Their study found that when exposed to atrazine at levels comparable to those measured in the Canadian environment, fewer tadpoles reached the froglet stage, and the ratio of females to males increased.

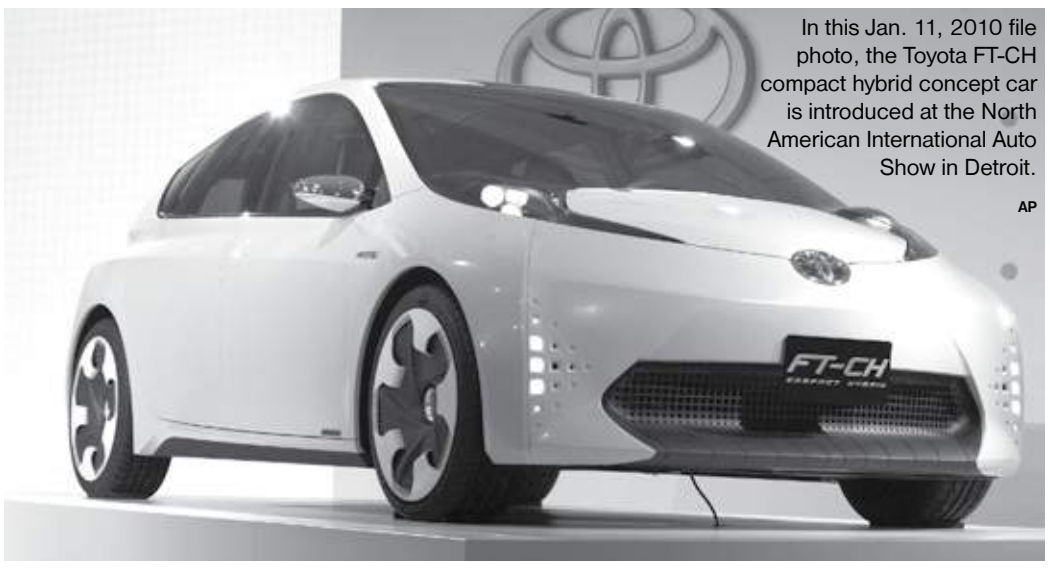
"Atrazine is one of the top-selling herbicides used worldwide and was designed to inhibit weed growth in cornfields," the university said in a statement. "It is so widely used that it can be detected in many rivers, streams and in some water supplies. This has raised the alarm on the possibility of other serious detrimental environmental effects."

Atrazine has been banned in the European Union but not in the United States. In October, the Environmental Protection Agency announced that it would re-evaluate the herbicide because of continuing concerns that its appearance in rivers, streams and other waterways was adversely affecting not only frogs but possibly also humans. Syngenta AG, which makes the herbicide, has defended its safety and said it has been valuable to farmers worldwide.

A previous study at the University of California at Berkeley also raised concerns about the effect of atrazine on the sexual development of frogs, in that case the African clawed frog.

5 reasons your next car will be electric

By JIM MOTAVALLI
MOTHER NATURE NETWORK (MNN.COM)



In this Jan. 11, 2010 file photo, the Toyota FT-CH compact hybrid concept car is introduced at the North American International Auto Show in Detroit.

AP

Take a look at that gas-guzzler in the driveway. Are you ready to wave goodbye in favor of something cleaner, greener and plugged in?

At the end of 2009, there's no turning back: We're going to electrify the world's auto fleet, and soon. I know, I know—besides hybrids, there aren't a lot of green cars on your radar right now. Today, 100 percent zero-emission battery-powered cars are scarce on the ground—there's a motley assemblage of 3,000 of them registered.

You can buy a Tesla Roadster if you have a spare $109,000 lying around. Wheego will sell you a Whip, which is a battery-powered "neighborhood" car that can be used locally on roads with speed limits below 35 mph. And there are a few highway-worthy cars on the international market, including the Indian-made Reva, the Chinese-made BYD E6 and the Norwegian Think City.

But despite all this, your next car (or maybe the one after that) will be electric: a hybrid, plug-in hybrid or battery car. That's where the auto industry is going, where the world is going. By this time next year, the picture will be dramatically different, with a host of consumer choices, from the sexy Fisker Karma and the versatile Volt to the ultra-cool Coda.

Gas cars won't disappear overnight, but they will do a slow fade. And here's five reasons why:

1 Feeling the heat.

The imperatives of climate change mean we'll have to stop burning fossil fuels, especially coal and oil. The Copenhagen talks did not produce a binding agreement, but trust me on this—one is coming. The successor to the Kyoto talks will be much tougher, and we won't make the numbers without putting millions of zero-emission cars on the road.

2 Oil peaking.

We may or may not have already reached global oil peak—the point where oil demand exceeds oil supply. The worldwide recession suppressed demand and gave us something of a breather, but the numbers on oil demand (especially from China and India) in the next decade are completely unsustainable, and everybody knows it.

3 The smart grid.

We're just starting to optimize our antiquated electric system, but the way forward is clear. Utilities are partnering with automakers to enable the easy charging of millions of EVs at night without adding new plants. Off-peak electricity production and transmission capacity could fuel the daily commutes of 73 percent of all cars, light trucks, SUVs and vans on the road today if they were plug-in hybrids, a 2007 study by Pacific Northwest National Laboratory found. What's more, solar car charging is becoming a reality, and that means a 100 percent zero-emissions loop—he answer to any critic who says that EVs get all their power from dirty coal plants. Even today, with 52 percent of U.S. electricity generated by coal-fired power plants, Plug-in America reports that EVs reduce emissions of greenhouse gases and most other pollutants compared with conventional gas or hybrid vehicles.

4 The better mousetrap.

EVs, on the road starting next year, will be better than gas cars in every way. Forget the idea that they're slow, or that you won't be able to get where you're going. I've driven every EV, and all of them were exciting on the road. Every carmaker is building one, and they know it will be a very competitive market demanding excellence in engineering. BMW tells me that the consumers test-driving its Mini E plug-in quickly got over their "range anxiety."

5 Plugging in.

You'll have a charging station at home, at work and at play. Starbucks and McDonald's will have them, and so will the big-box store down the street. Car charging will become ubiquitous _ offering you $3 and $4 electrical fill-ups. Some retailers will even offer 15-minute fast charging free to get you in the door.

For all these reasons and more, your next car will have a plug. And it will be fine, trust me on this.

Jim Motavalli, a regular contributor to the New York Times, *is the transportation blogger for MNN (www.mnn.com/featured-blogs/jmotavalli).*

HELP FILE

By ROB PEGORARO
(c) 2009, The Washington Post

Q: I understand that I'm not supposed to leave my old computer or TV out with the trash. How should I get rid of it?

A: You understand correctly: Most old electronics contain toxic materials such as lead, mercury and cadmium. Fortunately, your options for recycling old gadgets have improved since last year.

First try selling the old hardware or giving it away at a site such as Freecycle (freecycle.org), bearing in mind that cathode-ray-tube televisions may have zero appeal even when free to any taker. (Remember to wipe your old data from a computer.) You can also try selling smaller devices to sites such as Gazelle (gazelle.com), YouRenew.com and BuyMyTronics.com.

Older computers can find a second career after a tune-up: Local computer groups and larger nonprofits such as the National Cristina Foundation (cristina.org) refurbish donated machines and pass them on to local charities, schools and other worthy recipients.

For recycling options, check with your computer's manufacturer: Firms such as Apple (apple.com/environment), Dell (dell.com/recycle) and HP (hp.com/recycle) will recycle old hardware free under some conditions. You can also drop off computers and peripherals for recycling at a Staples store; a $10 fee applies to non-Dell PCs, monitors and printers. Best Buy stores (bestbuy.com/recycle) charge $10 for recycling laptops, monitors and smaller TVs but offer a $10 store gift card in return, while other gadgets are free to drop off.

For other reuse and recycling options, see the Consumer Electronics Association's myGreenElectronics (mygreenelectronics.org) and the Electronics TakeBack Coalition (electronicstakeback.com); the latter requires recyclers to pledge not to ship "e-waste" to developing countries and to abide by additional environmental standards.

Rob Pegoraro attempts to untangle computing conundrums and errant electronics each week. Send questions to The Washington Post, 1150 15th St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20071 or robp@washpost.com. Visit voices.washingtonpost.com/fasterforward for his Faster Forward blog.

Life & Style

On this rare map, China is the center of the world

BY BRETT ZONGKER
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

WASHINGTON (AP)—A rarely seen 400-year-old map that identified the state of Florida as "the Land of Flowers" and put China at the center of the world went on display Tuesday at the Library of Congress.

The map created by Matteo Ricci was the first in Chinese to show the Americas. Ricci, a Jesuit missionary from Italy, was among the first Westerners to live in what is now Beijing in the early 1600s. Known for introducing Western science to China, Ricci created the map in 1602 at the request of Emperor Wanli.

Ricci's map includes pictures and annotations describing different regions of the world. Africa was noted to have the world's highest mountain and longest river. The brief description of North America mentions "humped oxen" or bison, wild horses and a region named "Ka-na-ta."

Several Central and South American places are named, including "Wa-ti-ma-la" (Guatemala), "Yu-ho-t'ang" (Yucatan) and "Chih-Li" (Chile).

Ricci gave a brief description of the discovery of the Americas.

"In olden days, nobody had ever known that there were such places as North and South America or Magellanica," he wrote, using a label that early mapmakers gave to Australia and Antarctica. "But a hundred years ago, Europeans came sailing in their ships to parts of the sea coast, and so discovered them."

AP

Andrew Muller, 16, of Hamden, Conn., looks at Matteo Ricci's 1602 map nicknamed the "Impossible Black Tulip of Cartography" on display at the Library of Congress in Washington, on Monday Jan. 11, 2010. The map is the first map in Chinese to show the Americas.

ON THE NET:

Library of Congress: http://www.loc.gov/
James Ford Bell Library: http://bell.lib.umn.edu/

The Ricci map gained the nickname the "Impossible Black Tulip of Cartography" because it was so hard to find.

This map—one of only two in good condition—was purchased by the James Ford Bell Trust in October for $1 million, making it the second most expensive rare map ever sold. The library bought another of the world's rarest maps, the Waldseemuller world map, which was the first to name "America," for $10 million in 2003.

The Ricci map going on display had been held for years by a private collector in Japan and will eventually be housed at the Bell Library at the University of Minnesota. The map symbolizes the first connection between Eastern and Western thinking and commerce, said Ford W. Bell, co-trustee of the fund started by his grandfather, General Mills founder James Ford Bell.

Custodians at the Bell Library focus "on the development of trade and how that drove civilization—how that constant desire to find new markets to sell new products led to exchanges of knowledge, science, technology and really drove civilization," said Bell, who is also president of the American Association of Museums. "So (the map) fits in beautifully."

The map was being shown publicly for the first time in North America. It measures 12 feet by 5 feet (3.6 by 1.5 meters), printed on six rolls of rice paper.

The Library of Congress rarely exhibits artifacts it does not own because its holdings are so vast, but curators made an exception for the Ricci map. It will be on view through April alongside the Waldseemuller map.

The library also will create a digital image of the map to be posted online for researchers and students.

Ti Bin Zhang, first secretary for cultural affairs at the Chinese Embassy, said the map represents "the momentous first meeting of East and West" and was the "catalyst for commerce."

No examples of the map are known to exist in China, where Ricci was revered and buried. Only a few original copies are known to exist, held by the Vatican's libraries and collectors in France and Japan.

Vatican says 'Avatar' is no masterpiece

By ALESSANDRA RIZZO
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

VATICAN CITY (AP)—"Avatar" is wooing audiences worldwide with visually dazzling landscapes and nature-loving blue creatures. But the Vatican is no easy crowd to please.

The Vatican newspaper and radio station are criticizing James Cameron's 3-D blockbuster for flirting with the idea that worship of nature can replace religion—a notion the pope has warned against. They call the movie a simplistic and sappy tale, despite its awe-inspiring special effects.

"Not much behind the images" was how the Vatican newspaper, L'Osservatore Romano, summed it up in a headline. As the second highest-grossing movie ever, "Avatar" is challenging the record set by Cameron's previous movie "Titanic."

Generally it has been critically acclaimed and is touted as a leading Oscar contender.

Bolivia's first indigenous president, Evo Morales, has praised "Avatar" for what he calls its message of saving the environment from exploitation. But the movie also has drawn a number of critical voices. Some American conservative bloggers have decried its anti-militaristic message; a small group of people have said the movie contains racist themes.

To Vatican critics, the alien extravaganza is just "bland."

Cameron "tells the story without going deep into it, and ends up falling into sappiness," said L'Osservatore Romano. Vatican Radio called it "rather harmless" but said it was no heir to sci-fi masterpieces of the past.

Most significantly, much of the Vatican criticism was directed at the movie's central theme of man vs. nature.

L'Osservatore said the film "gets bogged down by a spiritualism linked to the worship of nature." Similarly, Vatican Radio said it "cleverly winks at all those pseudo-doctrines that turn ecology into the religion of the millennium."

"Nature is no longer a creation to defend, but a divinity to worship," the radio said.

Vatican spokesman the Rev. Federico Lombardi said that while the movie reviews are just that—film criticism, not theological pronouncements—they do reflect Pope Benedict XVI's views on the dangers of turning nature into a "new divinity."

Benedict has often spoken about the need to protect the environment, earning the nickname of "green pope." But he also has balanced that call with a warning against turning environmentalism into neo-paganism.

In a recent World Day of Peace message, the pontiff warned against any notions that equate human beings with other living things in the name of a "supposedly egalitarian vision." He said such notions "open the way to a new pantheism tinged with neo-paganism, which would see the source of man's salvation in nature alone, understood in purely naturalistic terms."

AP

In this film publicity image released by 20th Century Fox, Jake (Sam Worthington) meets his avatar, a genetically engineered hybrid of human DNA mixed with DNA from the natives of Pandora.

The pope explained in the message that while many experience tranquillity and peace when coming into contact with nature, a correct relationship between man and the environment should not lead to "absolutizing nature" or "considering it more important than the human person."

The Vatican newspaper occasionally likes to comment in its cultural pages on movies or pop culture icons, as it did recently about "The Simpsons" or U2. In one famous instance, several Vatican officials spoke out against "The Da Vinci Code."

In this case, the reviews came out after a red-carpet "Avatar" preview held in Rome just a stone's throw from St. Peter's Square. The movie—which has made more than $1.3 billion at box offices worldwide, partly boosted by higher 3-D ticket prices—will be released Friday in Italy.

"So much stupefying, enchanting technology, but few genuine emotions," said L'Osservatore in one of three articles devoted to "Avatar" in its Sunday editions. The plotline of aliens who live on a distant unspoiled planet and the humans who want to pillage their resources is a universal theme that can be reminiscent of past colonizations and wars, the paper said. As such, it is easy to relate to it, but also unoriginal.

"Everything is reduced to an overly simple anti-imperialistic and anti-militaristic parable," it said.

In America, the big numbers and media hype have been accompanied by some controversy.

Blog posts, newspaper articles, tweets and YouTube videos have criticized the film, with some calling it "a fantasy about race told from the point of view of white people" and that it reinforces "the white Messiah fable." Cameron says the real theme is about respecting others' differences.

An LA Times blog noted that the movie "has inflamed the passions of right-wing bloggers and pundits."

"Cameron incensed many voices on the right by acknowledging of-the-moment messages about imperialism, greed, ecological disregard and corporate irresponsibility," it said. Anti-smoking lobbies have denounced the cigarette-puffing character played by Sigourney Weaver.

Back at the Vatican, the reviews did praise the groundbreaking visuals of the movie.

Vatican Radio said that "really never before have such surprising images been seen," while L'Osservatore said the movie's worth lies in its "extraordinary visual impact."

‘Glee,’ ‘Modern Family’ among GLAAD nominees

LOS ANGELES (AP)—For the fourth year running, the ABC television network leads nominees for media awards from the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation.

The network earned eight nominations Wednesday for the 21st annual GLAAD Media Awards, with “Brothers & Sisters,” ‘’Grey’s Anatomy,” ‘’Private Practice” and newcomer “Modern Family” among its contenders.

The GLAAD Media Awards honor the fair, accurate and inclusive representation of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community and the issues that affect their lives in the media. This year’s awards—with 152 nominees in 32 categories—will be split into four ceremonies, held in Los Angeles, New York and San Francisco in March, April and June.

“Words and images matter,” GLAAD president Jarrett Barrios said in a statement. “With these awards, we seek to recognize news coverage and entertainment programming that go beyond stock stereotypes with LGBT storylines that more fully reflect the challenges gay and transgender people face and the aspirations we hold for ourselves and our families.”

ABC received the following nominations:

■ “Brothers & Sisters” and “Grey's Anatomy” for drama series

■ "Modern Family" for comedy series

■ "All My Children" and "One Life to Live" for daily drama

■ A "Good Morning America" interview with Chaz Bono for TV journalism segment

■ Two nominations for "Private Practice" for individual TV episode

Among the other nominated broadcast networks, CBS garnered four nods, the CW and NBC earned two each, and Fox had one. The other drama series nominees are AMC's "Mad Men," BBC America's "Skins" and HBO's "True Blood. The other comedy series nominees are Fox's "Glee," Logo's "Beautiful People," ABC Family's "Greek" and Showtime's "United States of Tara."

Reality TV nods went to CBS' "The Amazing Race 15," Bravo's "Kathy Griffin: My Life on the D-List," Logo's "RuPaul's Drag Race," and MTV's "The Real World" and "Making His Band." Logo's "An Englishman in New York," MTV's "Pedro," Lifetime's "Prayers for Bobby and BBC America's "Torchwood: Children of Earth" were nominated for TV movie or miniseries.

Documentary nominees are PBS' "Ask Not," HBO's "Be Like Others," Sundance Channel's "Derek," Logo's "U People" and Diva Productions' "The Topp Twins." Wide release feature film nominees are the family drama "Everybody's Fine," bromantic comedy "I Love You, Man," Harlem saga "Precious," 1960s period piece "A Single Man" and bohemian romp "Taking Woodstock."

GLAAD also announced that actress Cynthia Nixon will be honored with the Vito Russo Award, which is named after a founding member of GLAAD and is presented to a gay media professional who has made a significant difference in promoting equal rights for the gay community. The "Sex and the City" star will accept the special award at a ceremony in New York.

"Cynthia Nixon has been a vocal and visible advocate who has transformed cultural attitudes about our community," Barrios said.

AP

Golden Globe nominees Lea Michele, left, and Jane Lynch, both from the cast of “Glee,” laugh on the set of the television show at Paramount Studios in Los Angeles, Tuesday, Dec. 15, 2009.

AP

In this June 1, 2009 file photo provided by NBC, Conan O’Brien makes his debut as the host of NBC’s “The Tonight Show” in Universal City, Calif.

Conan O’Brien says no thanks to NBC move

By LYNN ELBER
AP TELEVISION WRITER

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Conan O’Brien has refused to play along with NBC’s plan to move “The Tonight Show” and return Jay Leno to late-night, abruptly derailing the network’s effort to resolve its scheduling mess.

O’Brien said in a statement Tuesday that shifting “Tonight” will “seriously damage what I consider to be the greatest franchise in the history of broadcasting,” and he expressed disappointment that NBC had given him less than a year to establish himself as host at 11:35 p.m. EST (0435 GMT).

O’Brien is in line to make approximately $30 million from NBC if he is replaced on “The Tonight Show” or if the show is canceled, said a source close to the situation who spoke on the condition of anonymity because the person was not authorized to speak about it publicly. However, the source said the sum would not apply just for moving O’Brien to a later time slot.

O’Brien said he doesn’t have an offer in hand from another network. Fox, which lacks a network late-night show, has expressed its appreciation for him but said this week that no negotiations have been held.

In his statement, wryly addressed to “People of Earth,” the comic knocked his network’s prime-time ratings woes, which stem in part from the poor performance of Leno’s new prime-time show. “The Jay Leno Show” debuted in the fall after Leno surrendered his 17-year stake in the “Tonight” last spring to O’Brien.

“It was my mistaken belief that, like my predecessor, I would have the benefit of some time and, just as important, some degree of ratings support from the prime-time schedule. Building a lasting audience at 11:30 is impossible without both,” O’Brien said.

“But sadly, we were never given that chance. After only seven months, with my ‘Tonight Show’ in its infancy, NBC has decided to react to their terrible difficulties in prime-time by making a change in their long-established late night schedule.

Growing up watching “Tonight” host Johnny Carson and getting the chance to “one day sit in that chair has meant everything to me,” and was an opportunity he worked long and hard to obtain, O’Brien said.

“Tonight” has long been the dominant late-night program on television, with O’Brien following in a line of hosts that included Steve Allen, Jack Paar, Johnny Carson and Leno. For many of those years, an appearance on “Tonight,” particularly for comics, could make or break a career.

NBC wants to move Leno out of prime-time and to the 11:35 p.m. (0435 GMT) slot with a half-hour show, bumping “Tonight” to 12:05 a.m. (0505 GMT)—the latest it’s ever regularly aired. The network was under pressure to make a change from its affiliate stations, who found Leno’s show an inadequate ratings lead-in for their lucrative local newscasts.

Online, many took to O’Brien’s defense and applauded the host’s stand against NBC. “Team Conan” was one of the most popular Twitter topics Tuesday afternoon, as young viewers pledged their allegiance to O’Brien.

An O’Brien portrait also circulated as a badge of support. Referring to the “Tonight” show host’s playful nickname, it read, “I’m with Coco,” and featured a black-and-white picture of a regal-looking O’Brien standing in front of an American flag. The only color: his shock of orange hair.

It doesn’t make sense for NBC to try and hold him to a contract, said John Rash, a media analyst for the Chicago advertising firm Campbell & Mithun.

“An unhappy comedian is not a good premise for a program,” Rash said.

Jody Simon, an entertainment lawyer with Peter Rubin & Simon, said it’s very likely that O’Brien and NBC will reach some sort of settlement that might require him to refrain from working at another late-night show for a certain time.

He expected O’Brien will not boycott his show, despite the expressed desire to quit.

The late-night shuffle has played out amid wide speculation that O’Brien might bolt for Fox. And the network’s top entertainment executive, Kevin Reilly, said on Monday, “I love Conan personally and professionally.”

Fox has had trouble launching late-night shows in the past, with Chevy Chase and Joan Rivers as notable failures. O’Brien offers the advantage of being a proven performer with a team experienced in putting on a show.

Fox declined comment Tuesday on O’Brien’s statement, but it is taking action that would indicate the network is seriously considering bringing him to late-night, a period now largely filled by a variety of syndicated fare that includes network reruns.

Fox is asking some of its stations to study and report back on how much money is made with current late-night programming, according to a person familiar with the request. The person spoke on condition of anonymity because the person was not authorized to publicly discuss the request.

The syndication agreements that are in place are a costly sticking point if Fox wants to put in a late-night show across the network, the person said.

It might not be easy for affiliate stations to break profitable syndication agreements, said analyst Rash.

NBC announced the “Tonight Show” succession plan in 2004, well before Leno’s departure, to try to avoid the Leno-David Letterman battle that ensued when Carson retired. (On his CBS “Late Show” Tuesday, Letterman joked that he received a call from NBC with the message, “Look, look, we still don’t want you back.’”) But it didn’t count on Leno remaining atop the late-night ratings when he was pushed out of “Tonight.”

O’Brien said he hoped that he and NBC could resolve the issue quickly so he could do a show of which he and his crew could be proud—”for a company that values our work”—raising the possibility he might go to another network.

NBC declined comment Tuesday, adding that O’Brien was scheduled to do his show Tuesday night. Leno also declined comment.

For O’Brien, it’s been a stark contrast to early in his career, when he was an unknown replacing David Letterman in the 12:30 a.m. (0530 GMT) slot. He suffered brutal reviews, tough ratings and was working on a week-to-week contract. But NBC’s management then stuck with him, and he blossomed into a proven performer.

Can Julia Roberts come back on her own terms?

By RACHEL ABRAMOWITZ
LOS ANGELES TIMES

The feeling around Hollywood lately is that Sandra Bullock has in some ways walked off with Julia Roberts' career. The actress opted for "The Proposal" after Roberts passed and starred in "The Blind Side," which had been first offered to Roberts back when the film was at Fox.

Roberts has instead decided to focus on her family, stepping back in to the limelight mainly to play supporting parts in movies like "Charlie Wilson's War" and ensemble roles like the one she has in the upcoming Garry Marshall flick "Valentine's Day" (which, as those ubiquitous TV ads have shown, has Roberts playing a soldier who flirts outrageously with Bradley Cooper).

CREDIT: EVAN AGOSTINI/AP
Julia Roberts

"Duplicity" last year marked a comeback of sorts, but while the complex thriller impressed the critics, regular Joes appear to have found the tale of two corporate spies a little remote.

Now comes word that Roberts is taking on another lead role, with "Charlie Wilson's War" buddy Tom Hanks writing and directing a movie for the two of them about a man re-inventing his life at middle age. The man endures a midlife crisis and joins a kids' Vespa gang; Roberts plays an instructor at a school that Hanks' character enrolls in. (Clearly the midlife-crisis theme is resonant for Hanks—he also owns the rights to the book "How Starbucks Changed My Life," a memoir about a man who goes to work at Starbucks at age 63 after he was diagnosed with a brain tumor.)

Fans (this writer included) tend to feel like it's been a long time since they've gotten their fix of the big wide smile and the whole smiling-through-tears moment that seems to come in every commercial movie she does, from "Pretty Woman" to "Notting Hill."

Of course, the more limited work schedule is not just a family thing for Roberts. She's now choosing her films on a lot more than their commercial appeal, taking on ambitious projects that offer her the chance to play meatier roles.

In August, she'll be seen doing just that when "Eat, Pray, Love," the adaptation of Elizabeth Gilbert's bestselling memoir about a woman who travels the globe after her divorce, hits the screen. That movie has general appeal and should stoke fan interest (especially the pairing of Roberts and Javier Bardem). But directed by "Nip/Tuck" creator Ryan Murphy, it also appears to be the kind of film that works in Roberts' interest in more prestige fare.

Last spring, Roberts told this paper that she can't imagine herself recycling the romantic rescue tropes that endeared her to audiences in the '90s. "I can't play those parts anymore," she said. "It just doesn't work for me at 41, with three kids and happily married."

But as the skyrocketing careers of Sandra Bullock and Meryl Streep have demonstrated recently, in contemporary you can also tell real stories about women over 40 that have genuine broad appeal. You can be, in other words, the new Julia Roberts.

No sequels, spinoffs for 'Lost'

By DAVID BAUDER
AP TELEVISION WRITER

PASADENA, California (AP)—When ABC's drama "Lost" ends in May, it will definitively end—don't look for any sequels or spinoffs.

The show's producers said Tuesday they've known the final image of the mythologically dense series about Oceanic Airlines Flight 815 since the first season, although Carlton Cuse said the last episode hasn't been written yet. It will air sometime in May.

Cuse and Damon Lindelof were giving away few secrets to the show's rabid fans at a news conference Tuesday, even refraining to show video clips. They said the show's sixth and final season will hearken back to its first, and most popular, season in 2004.

AP
Josh Holloway, left, and Evangeline Lilly, cast members in the television series "Lost," laugh during a panel discussion at the Disney ABC Television Critics Association winter press tour in Pasadena, Calif., Tuesday, Jan. 12, 2010.

The producers were initially sweating about their two-hour season opener, scheduled for Feb. 2, when they heard President Barack Obama had been considering that night for his State of the Union address. It promises to be a challenging episode; actress Emilie de Ravin said she had to read the script three times before it made any sense.

"Get ready to scratch your heads, America," Lindelof said.

A one-hour recap special, an attempt to get uninitiated or casual viewers as familiar with the story as they can, will precede the opener.

In its lifetime, "Lost" proved that it's possible for a television series to challenge its viewers and pull off production values that rival feature films, said Stephen McPherson, ABC entertainment president.

"It will arguably be one of the most influential shows of the decade, if not of all time," McPherson said.

One secret producers did reveal: actress Cynthia Watros, who played the character Libby before being killed off in the second season, will return this year.

"Finally, all of your questions (about Libby) will be answered," Cuse said.

"No, they will not," Lindelof said.

That's something fans should prepare themselves for overall: not all of the questions raised during the series will be answered. "That would be too pedantic," Cuse said.

They're hoping that final show is something that will be talked about afterward in much the same way as the diner scene that ended "The Sopranos."

"I don't think it would be 'Lost' if there wasn't any arguing and active debate among the viewers about whether or not it was a good ending," Lindelof said. "My mom will say it's a good ending, even though she doesn't understand the show."

"Lost" has gone through so many inexplicable twists and turns, and flash-forwards to the future, that one writer wondered whether fans had already seen the ending in a previous episode. Cuse said no.

Actors said filming the series has been an emotional journey. "I'm going to cry like a baby when this series ends," actress Evangeline Lilly said.

Polanski sues French media for invasion of privacy

PARIS (AP)—The news snapshot shows Roman Polanski standing at a window, a thin slice of his face visible amid an opening in the curtains. The French paper that printed the photo saw it as a newsworthy depiction of the director's life under house arrest in his Swiss Alpine chalet.

Lawyers for the "Chinatown" director say that the December 2009 photo and many others invaded his privacy as well as his family's, and he and his wife are suing four French publications, two newspapers and two magazines for a total of about €150,000 ($217,215).

In a hearing Tuesday, Polanski lawyer Marion Gregoire said the suits were an attempt "to put an urgent stop to the media spotlight" on the filmmaker and his family that has intensified in the months since a 32-year-old sex case against him was revived.

Several of the photos at issue depict Polanski's children, Elvis and Morgane—who, as minors, are especially protected by French media law.

"The legal case against Polanski in no way justifies the paparazzi's stalking of his wife and children," Gregoire said.

Invasion of privacy suits by celebrities are common in France, Polanski's permanent residence and the country where he had lived for three decades before he was arrested in September while en route to a Swiss film festival.

Polanski, arrested on a U.S. warrant, spent more than 60 days in detention in a Swiss jail before being transferred to house arrest in his Swiss vacation home on Dec. 4.

Authorities in Switzerland have not yet ruled on whether to extradite Polanski to Los Angeles. He had fled the U.S. in 1978 on the eve of sentencing after pleading guilty to having unlawful sex with a minor in 1977.

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Daybreakers
Friday 4:10 7:30 9:50
Saturday 1:20 4:10 7:30 9:50
Sunday 1:20 4:10 7:30
Mon thru Thurs 4:10 7:30
Ethan Hawke, William Dafoe
Horror • Rated R
Synopsis
Fresh off the success of their inventive take on the zombie genre, Undead masterminds Michael and Peter Spierig direct Ethan Hawke in an ambitious tale of a futuristic Earth populated entirely by vampires, and the efforts made by the creatures to ensure that their food supply doesn't run out as humankind is faced with extinction. The year is 2017, and a vampire plague has turned most of the planet's human population into bloodsucking ghouls.

Youth in Revolt
Friday 4:00 7:00 9:45
Saturday 1:00 4:00 7:00 9:45
Sunday 1:00 4:00 7:00
Mon thru Thurs 4:00 7:00
M. Emmet Walsh, Fred Willard
Comedy • Rated R
Synopsis
Superbad's Michael Cera discovers a vacation romance in Youth in Revolt, a teen comedy from Charlie Bartlett's screenwriter, Gustin Nash, and director Miguel Arteta (Chuck & Buck). The film is an adaptation of C.D. Payne's first book in a series of best-selling satirical novels starring Nick Twisp, a sexually charged 14-year-old whose intelligence and hormones get him into all sorts of adventures.

Sherlock Holmes
Friday 4:05 7:05 9:55
Saturday 1:05 4:05 7:05 9:55
Sunday 1:05 4:05 7:05
Mon thru Thurs 4:05 7:05
Robert Downey, Jr., Jude Law
Action, Mystery • Rated PG 13
Synopsis
Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's famous super-sleuth, Sherlock Holmes, gets an update with this adaptation of Lionel Wigram's comic book series by writer/director Guy Ritchie (RocknRolla) starring Robert Downey Jr. as the titular detective, with Jude Law stepping into the shoes of his sidekick, Dr. Watson. Heading up the rest of the cast are RocknRolla's Mark Strong as the film's villain, Blackwood, and Rachel McAdams portraying the love interest, Irene Adler.

It's Complicated
Friday 4:20 7:10 9:40
Saturday 1:30 4:20 7:10 9:40
Sunday 1:30 4:20 7:10
Mon thru Thurs 4:20 7:10
Meryl Streep, Alec Baldwin
Comedy • Rated R

Avatar
Friday 3:55 6:55 10:00
Saturday 12:50 3:55 6:55 10:00
Sunday 12:50 3:55 6:55
Mon thru Thurs 3:55 6:55
Sam Worthington, Zoe Saldana
Science Fiction • Rated PG 13

Alvin & The Chipmunks: The Sqeakquel
Friday 4:15 7:25 9:30
Saturday 1:15 4:15 7:25 9:30
Sunday 1:15 4:15 7:25
Mon thru Thurs 4:15 7:25
Justin Long, Matthew Gray Gubler
Children, Family • Rated PG

The Princess And The Frog
Friday 4:30 7:20 9:35
Saturday 1:10 4:30 7:20 9:35
Sunday 1:10 4:30 7:20
Mon thru Thurs 4:30 7:20
Anika Noni Rose, John Goodman
Comedy, Family • Rated G

● NO PASSES ■ NO PASSES OR SUPER SAVERS
GIFT CERTIFICATES AVAILABLE • R-RATED FILMS REQUIRE PHOTO I.D.
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Sarah Palin makes debut as Fox News contributor

NEW YORK (AP)—Former Republican vice presidential candidate Sarah Palin accounts for the controversy she attracts by saying her opponents don't like the "commonsense, conservative solutions" she represents.

Debuting as a Fox News analyst, the former Alaska governor was the guest of Bill O'Reilly on Tuesday's edition of "The O'Reilly Factor."

During the interview, Palin said sinking approval numbers for President Barack Obama reflect "an uncomfortableness" some Americans feel toward his administration.

She told O'Reilly she hadn't seen a recent "60 Minutes" report about her, explaining she was warned it contained "a bunch of b.s."

O'Reilly invited her back any time she wants to set the record straight.

Palin's multiyear deal with the network was announced Monday.

AP

In this photo released by The Fox News Channel's O'Reilly Factor, former Alaska Governor and Vice Presidential candidate, Sarah Palin, makes her first appearance as a FOX News Channel contributor on "The O'Reilly Factor," Tuesday, Jan. 12, 2010 in New York. Host Bill O'Reilly is seated at right.

'Avatar,' 'Star Trek' vie for editing honors

LOS ANGELES (AP)—The science-fiction tales "Avatar," ''Star Trek" and "District 9" have grabbed three of the five nominations for top dramatic honors from the American Cinema Editors.

Also nominated for best editing in a dramatic film are the war story "The Hurt Locker" and the recession-era tale "Up in the Air."

Nominated Monday for editing on a comedy or musical were the romances "(500) Days of Summer" and "It's Complicated," the Vegas romp "The Hangover," the Julia Child story "Julie & Julia" and the 1960s domestic tale "A Serious Man."

Animated film nominees are "Up," ''Fantastic Mr. Fox" and "Coraline."

Winners will be announced at a Hollywood ceremony Feb. 14.

Thief nabs $1M in jewels, clothes from Usher's car

ATLANTA (AP) — Atlanta police say a thief stole $1 million in jewelry, clothing and other belongings from R&B singer Usher's Sports Utility Vehicle while he shopped last month.

According to an Atlanta Police Department report, the Atlanta resident was returning from the airport on Dec. 14 when he and a companion stopped at an AT&T Store in an upscale shopping area.

Police say an unidentified man pried open the driver's side door of the SUV and stole $1,065,700 worth of laptops, cameras, jewels and other items. A witness tells police the suspect escaped in a burgundy Chevrolet Impala.

A message left seeking comment wasn't immediately returned by a spokeswoman for Usher, whose real name is Usher Raymond IV.

AP

In this Sept. 24, 2009 file photo, musician Usher speaks at the 2009 Clinton Global Initiative Annual Meeting in New York.

AP

In this Sept. 27, 2006 file photo, U.S. illusionist David Copperfield arrives for a press conference in Vienna to promote his show "An Intimate Evening Of Grand Illusion".

Rape investigation of David Copperfield closed

SEATTLE (AP)—Federal prosecutors have closed a two-year investigation into rape allegations against magician David Copperfield without filing charges.

The notice came in a brief court document filed Tuesday by Assistant U.S. Attorney Susan Roe.

The woman who made the complaint, a former Miss Washington contestant, said in a related civil lawsuit against Copperfield, whose real name is David Kotkin, that she met him during a performance in Kennewick and was invited to visit his private island in the Bahamas in July 2007.

The woman claimed that once she arrived, Copperfield sexually assaulted her.

The illusionist's lawyers said he denied the allegations and called lawsuit "extortion for money, plain and simple."

ENTERTAINMENT TIDBITS

Simon and Garfunkel to perform at Jazz Fest

NEW ORLEANS (AP)—Simon and Garfunkel have been added to the lineup for this year's New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival. The singing-songwriting duo of Paul Simon and Art Garfunkel will join the previously announced Jazz Fest lineup that includes Pearl Jam, Aretha Franklin, Van Morrison, The Neville Brothers, Lionel Richie, the Allman Brothers Band and Anita Baker. The festival is scheduled for the weekends of April 23-25 and April 29-May 2 at the Fair Grounds Race Course. Simon and Garfunkel will be on stage on April 24. While Simon has performed at Jazz Fest before, this will be the duo's first time together. Festival organizers say it is also their only planned U.S. appearance for the year.

Cybill Shepherd's son charged in mid-air thefts

PHILADELPHIA (AP)—The son of actress Cybill Shepherd has been charged with stealing from fellow airplane passengers during a cross-country flight. Police say 22-year-old Cyrus Shepherd-Oppenheim was arrested in Philadelphia on Tuesday around midnight after the United Airlines plane arrived from San Francisco. Police say witnesses identified Shepherd-Oppenheim as the man who allegedly stole cash, a digital camera, leather make-up case and a small travel bag from two passengers' carry-on luggage. Shepherd-Oppenheim has been charged with theft and receiving stolen property. He is the son of "Moonlighting" star Shepherd and chiropractor Bruce Oppenheim, who divorced in 1989. It was not immediately clear if he had a lawyer.

Nominees announced for $20,000 Story Prize

NEW YORK (AP)—Pakistani writer Daniyal Mueenuddin is among three finalists for the Story Prize, a $20,000 award for outstanding short fiction. Prize organizers announced Tuesday that the nominees are Mueenuddin's "In Other Rooms, Other Wonders," Victoria Patterson's "Drift" and Wells Tower's "Everything Ravaged, Everything Burned." The winner will be announced March 3. Previous recipients of the prize, founded in 2004, include Tobias Wolff and Edwidge Danticat. Mueenuddin was finalist last fall for the National Book Award.

Bolivia's Morales lauds social themes in 'Avatar'

LA PAZ, Bolivia (AP)—Bolivia's first indigenous president is praising "Avatar" for what he calls its message of saving the environment from exploitation. A self-proclaimed socialist, Evo Morales says he identifies with the film's "profound show of resistance to capitalism and the struggle for the defense of nature." James Cameron's "Avatar" tells of the mystic, nature-loving Na'vi—tall blue creatures who inhabit the planet Pandora and must contend with humans intent on grabbing its resources. It has earned more than $1.1 billion worldwide since its release last month. Morales' comments were reported Tuesday by the official news agency ABI. ABI said he watched the film with his daughter Sunday in his third-ever trip to the movies.

Parents fear son's tag-along girlfriend will hold him back

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
FROM UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

DearAbby

DEAR ABBY: Our son, "Sam," is a senior in high school and has chosen a college that will suit his major. Now, all of a sudden, his girlfriend, "Amanda," has decided she wants to attend the same school. We'd like to discourage it because we know she's only going there to be close to our son. We feel she needs to get out on her own as much as Sam does.

Sam has tried to break up with her in the past, but she makes him feel guilty about breaking it off. We have talked to our son about her and her behavior. He is a bright kid, but seems not to be smart where Amanda is concerned.

Please help us figure out a way to make Sam understand the kind of position he's putting himself in. Amanda is needy and spoiled. She has never had to work for anything. Our son holds down two jobs and seems very independent—so why is he coddling her?

HELP NEEDED IN WISCONSIN

DEAR HELP NEEDED: Sam may be emotional about Amanda, or just so soft-hearted he can't get past her guilt trips. Please remain calm, because college is almost a year away and a lot can happen between now and then. If Amanda's focus is on Sam and not her grades, although she may want to attend the same college, she may not be accepted for enrollment.

If she is, then your husband needs to have a man-to-man talk with Sam and point out that when he gets to college he is going to be exposed to many different experiences and people, that he's quickly going to grow emotionally and intellectually, and that is why it's important that he keeps his options open.

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: My problem is I attract needy people. I don't have a problem setting boundaries. However, those boundaries are frequently crossed because the person is so self-absorbed that he/she "can't hear" me.

How does one draw the line with a complete stranger who wants to tell me her whole life story the first time we meet, and sucks away my energy and my time? I feel like the individual isn't even talking to me. She might as well be talking to herself or to a wall for all I care.

Abby, I do not want to continue being taken hostage by these kinds of people. I'm not interested in their lives or troubles. I have enough of my own. I don't want to be unkind, but I haven't found a way to protect myself from being forced to invest time in needy acquaintances with whom I do not wish to pursue a relationship. I am not a total (rhymes with witch), but I am definitely ...

BAFFLED IN VERO BEACH, FLA.

DEAR BAFFLED: If I understand your description correctly, the type of person you describe is a "sapper." These are individuals who talk until they completely drain the energy from their "victim"—not unlike vampires in Stephenie Meyer's novels.

An effective way to deal with a sapper is to stop the conversation. Explain that he or she has caught you at a time or place when it's inconvenient to talk, or tell the person you do not feel qualified to deal with their situation and refer them to a doctor, lawyer or therapist. Then walk away or end the phone call—depending upon how they have "attached" themselves to you.

DEAR ABBY: My boyfriend broke up with me, saying, "It's not me, it's you." If he meant it as a joke, I didn't feel like laughing. What should I have said to him?

STUNG IN DENVER

DEAR STUNG: The best response is the one you probably gave him: "Goodbye!"

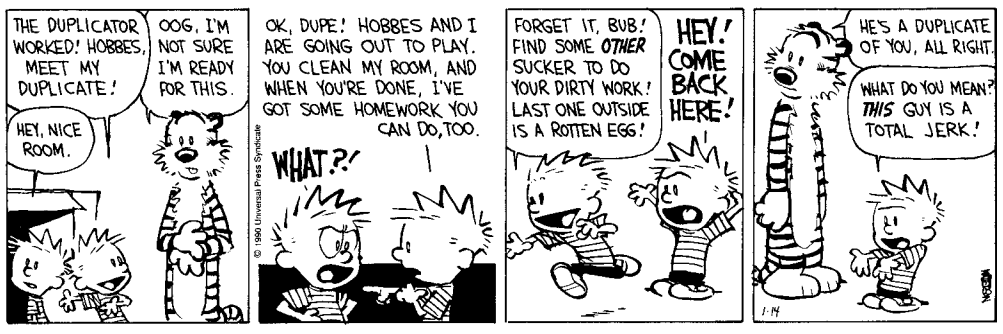
Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

What teens need to know about sex, drugs, AIDS and getting along with peers and parents is in "What Every Teen Should Know." To order, send a business-sized, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for $6 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby—Teen Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included in the price.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


THE DUPLICATOR WORKED! HOBBES, MEET MY DUPLICATE!
OOG, I'M NOT SURE I'M READY FOR THIS.
HEY, NICE ROOM.
© 1990 Universal Press Syndicate
OK, DUPE! HOBBES AND I ARE GOING OUT TO PLAY. YOU CLEAN MY ROOM, AND WHEN YOU'RE DONE, I'VE GOT SOME HOMEWORK YOU CAN DO, TOO.
WHAT?!
FORGET IT, BUB! FIND SOME OTHER SUCKER TO DO YOUR DIRTY WORK! LAST ONE OUTSIDE IS A ROTTEN EGG!
HEY! COME BACK HERE!
HE'S A DUPLICATE OF YOU, ALL RIGHT.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN? THIS GUY IS A TOTAL JERK!

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

IT'S NOT EASY BEING A CRIME FIGHTER AROUND HERE
JIM DAVIS 1-14
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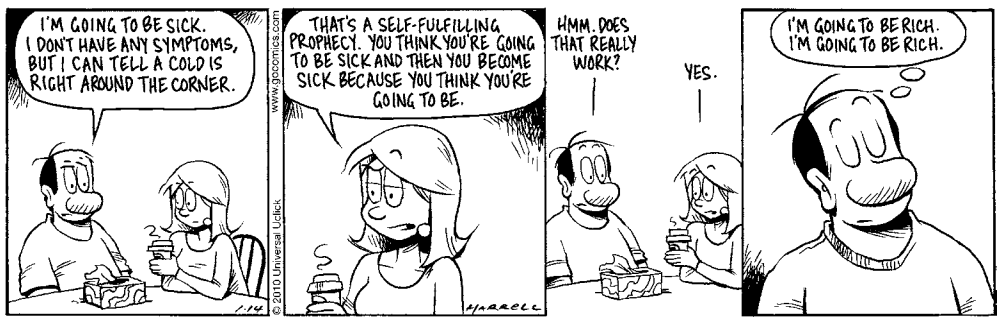
BECAUSE THERE ISN'T ANY CRIME
EXCEPT WHAT ODIEBOY DID TO THE RUG LAST THURSDAY
Distributed by Universal Press Syndicate

Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


I'M GOING TO BE SICK. I DON'T HAVE ANY SYMPTOMS, BUT I CAN TELL A COLD IS RIGHT AROUND THE CORNER.
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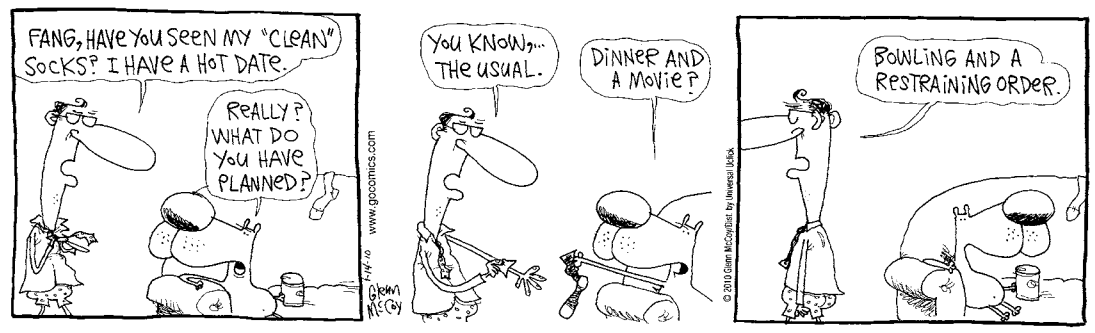
www.gocomics.com
THAT'S A SELF-FULFILLING PROPHECY. YOU THINK YOU'RE GOING TO BE SICK AND THEN YOU BECOME SICK BECAUSE YOU THINK YOU'RE GOING TO BE.
HARRELL
HMM. DOES THAT REALLY WORK?
YES.
I'M GOING TO BE RICH. I'M GOING TO BE RICH.

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy


FANG, HAVE YOU SEEN MY "CLEAN" SOCKS? I HAVE A HOT DATE.
REALLY? WHAT DO YOU HAVE PLANNED?
1-14-10
www.gocomics.com
YOU KNOW,... THE USUAL.
DINNER AND A MOVIE?
BOWLING AND A RESTRAINING ORDER.
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CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS
1 "Deal or No Deal" choice
5 Corral
8 Caffeinated nut
12 Bellow
13 Genetics abbr.
14 Rhyming tributes
15 Boleyn or Bronte
16 Doctrine
17 Deli loaves
18 Mass confusion
20 Quite some time
22 Hunting time
26 Polish
29 $ dispenser
30 Leading lady?
31 Safecracker
32 Honest politician?
33 Calendar abbr.
34 A Bobbsey twin
35 Twosome on stage
36 Failed to be
37 Enigma
40 Carte
41 14-Across, e.g.
45 Settled down
47 Support system?
49 Its three largest cities start with C
50 Faxed
51 "— Town"
52 Peter, Paul & Mary's genre
53 Deck
54 Profit
55 Release

DOWN
1 Grouch
2 Top-notch
3 Hourglass fill
4 Soon
5 Top-rated
6 Em halves
7 Sanskrit salutation
8 "M*A*S*H" setting
9 Post-Trojan War wanderer
10 Shelter
11 Fool
19 Mimic
21 Jewel
23 Business bigwig
24 Microwave, e.g.
25 Egg container?
26 Harmonization
27 Get better
28 Shame
32 Birders' society
33 Leave the ground
35 Lair
36 Court
38 Squabble
39 Dizzying designs
42 Explorer Heyerdahl
43 Anger
44 Servitude symbol
45 Invite
46 Grazing area
48 Wish otherwise

Solution time: 25 mins.

		H	O	P			F	G	H			
	C	O	I	L		A	R	I	E	L		
S	A	U	N	A		P	U	L	L	U	P	
K	I	N	K	Y	F	R	I	E	D	M	A	N
I	N	D		F	L	I	T	S		B	I	O
			D	U	A	L			E	A	R	N
	C	U	R	L	Y		B	I	E	R	S	
T	O	N	Y			M	O	C	K			
A	C	T		A	T	O	N	E		F	O	P
B	O	O	T	S	R	A	N	D	O	L	P	H
	A	L	B	I	O	N		T	R	E	A	D
		D	A	D	O	S		E	T	C	H	
			R	E	P			A	S	K		

Yesterday's answer 1-14

1	2	3	4	■	5	6	7	■	8	9	10	11
12				■	13				14			
15				■	16			■	17			
18				19		■	20	21			■	■
■	■	■	22			23					24	25
26	27	28			■	29			■	30		
31				■	32			■	33			
34			■	35			■	36				
37			38				39			■	■	■
■	■	40				■	41			42	43	44
45	46			■	47	48		■	49			
50				■	51				52			
53				■	54			■	55			

STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Jason Bateman, 41; LL Cool J, 42; Emily Watson, 43; Faye Dunaway, 69

Happy Birthday: You may feel like being the quiet observer but you have too much to offer that will allow you greater freedom in the future. Participation will keep you in the game. Don't be afraid to take a different approach to something you've done many times before. Your numbers are 5, 12, 15, 21, 30, 32, 39

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): Find out all you can about the people you are dealing with so you can work your way around a sticky situation that has the potential to damage your position or your reputation. Letting someone else make the first move will be detrimental. ✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): Your persistence in the past, coupled with your strong beliefs and somewhat stubborn attitude will pay off now. Business travel, conferences or communication will help to flush out any problem areas and allow you to stay in control. ✪✪✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): It's important to be creative when you are trying to put your plans into motion. However, keep your costs down. Moderation and practicality are two factors you must incorporate if you want to be successful. ✪✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): You are facing changes that will benefit you in the end. Don't let your personal responsibilities stop you from taking advantage of an offer. Your success will be a good thing for everyone to whom you are close. ✪✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): Avoid being too generous with your time and money if you want to impress people who can make a difference to your professional future. Make a strategic move that will guarantee your success. There is money heading your way. ✪✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): Children, friends and activities that interest you will all help direct you to a bigger and brighter future. Get out shopping or look for something to enhance you physically, mentally or financially. Plan a little romance for late in the day. ✪✪✪✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): Keep a low profile, especially if there are people who are not heading in the same direction as you trying to infiltrate your space. When you have everything in place, you will stand a better chance of getting what you want or moving on without as much opposition. ✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): The more you experience and share your thoughts with others, the more you will realize how much you have to offer. Love is on the rise and an interesting partnership that offers something very unique will develop. Make positive geographic or emotional moves. ✪✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): You don't have to take a back seat if you don't agree with something, but be diplomatic. Someone you are dealing with will remind you of an old acquaintance. Use similar tactics to get this person to act on your behalf. ✪✪✪

CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): If you owe someone something, pay it back

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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and, if you are owed something, ask for its return. Finish undone matters that are holding you back. Recognition is heading your way—take full credit for your efforts. ✪✪✪

AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): Clear up matters concerning institutions, government agencies or personal business matters. Don't leave anything to chance. A relationship that is not out in the open may be exciting but will cause damage if you don't face issues head-on. ✪✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): You don't have to wait for someone else to make the first move. Getting involved in an organization that complements your own agenda will pay off. Love is in the stars and better times are heading your way. ✪✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You can master anything you put your mind to. You are unique, thoughtful and have great depth. You have some difficulty with authority and regulations.

Eugenia's Web sites: ***eugenialast.com*** *for confidential consultations,* ***myspace.com/eugenialast*** *for Eugenia's blog,* ***astroadvice.com*** *for fun*

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

			1		3	6		
	1			2			3	
2					4			
1		7						2
	2						7	
4						9		3
			4					8
	3			6			1	
		6	3		9			

Difficulty Level ★★★ 1/14

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

2	4	7	3	1	9	6	8	5
3	8	6	5	2	7	9	1	4
1	9	5	8	6	4	3	2	7
5	2	4	7	9	8	1	3	6
8	1	3	6	4	5	2	7	9
6	7	9	2	3	1	5	4	8
9	6	1	4	7	3	8	5	2
7	5	2	1	8	6	4	9	3
4	3	8	9	5	2	7	6	1

Difficulty Level ★★★ 1/13

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and **CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD.** The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

CLOUDS **Solution: 7 letters**

N	T	E	S	D	S	W	O	D	A	H	S	M	O	G
O	O	S	N	M	H	F	L	O	A	T	A	T	G	T
I	S	I	A	I	R	S	I	Z	E	E	F	A	S	L
T	W	S	T	C	H	O	E	W	T	I	S	A	A	D
A	S	E	E	P	R	S	T	S	H	E	C	Y	R	Y
(T)	(S)	(I)	(M)	N	R	E	N	S	O	E	E	I	D	G
I	R	D	P	V	I	O	V	U	R	R	F	O	D	O
P	E	N	E	L	A	F	S	O	S	T	B	E	R	L
I	V	I	R	S	R	P	F	B	L	U	E	A	I	O
C	L	K	A	E	N	I	O	U	A	T	N	N	Z	R
E	I	R	T	I	T	E	W	R	P	W	I	H	Z	O
R	S	A	U	K	E	T	D	S	O	N	A	R	L	E
P	W	D	R	S	C	H	A	N	G	E	R	V	E	T
S	C	I	E	N	C	E	S	P	O	G	R	A	Y	E
E	R	E	H	P	S	O	M	T	A	C	E	V	O	M

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Absorption, Atmosphere, Blue, Body, Change, Condensed, Dark, Drift, Drizzle, Float, Forecast, Gaseous, Gray, Haze, Layers, Lining, Mass, Meteorology, Mist, Move, Overcast, Pattern, Precipitation, Puffiness, Rain, Science, Shadows, Shift, Silver, Size, Skies, Smog, Snow, Steam, Storms, Sunshine, Swirl, Temperature, Vapor, Veil, Water, Wavy, White, Wind

Yesterday's Answer: Teddy Bear

SALE: The topics of "Wonderword for Kids" appeal to younger fans but the puzzle-difficulty matches what you've come to expect from Wonderword. For a limited time, this book is on sale for just $4 each (U.S. funds only), payable to Universal Uclick. Include $3 postage for the first book order, $1 pkh for each additional book. Send to Wonderword, 1130 Walnut St., Kansas City, Mo. 64106 or call toll free, 1-800-642-6480.

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pro se

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

In Re The Matter Of The Petition To Appoint General Guardianship and Guardian of Estate for:	))))))	FCD GU CIVIL ACTION NO. 10-0006
Kaylene Camacho Reyes Minor Child	)))	**NOTICE OF HEARING**
By: Angel M. Falig and Patricia C. Falig	)))	
Petitioners	)	

Notice is hereby given that the above-entitled matter is set for a hearing on February 1, 2010, at 9:00 a.m. in Courtroom 205, before Associate Judge Kenneth L. Govendo.

Dated this 11th day of January, 2010.

BERNADITA SABLAN
Clerk of Court

/s/ By: Deputy Clerk of Court

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Saipan Tribune

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Vacancy Announcement
Assistant Executive Director/Program Officer
Northern Mariana Islands Council for the Humanities

The Northern Mariana Islands Council for the Humanities (Council) is soliciting applications for the position of Assistant Executive Director/Program Officer. The Assistant Executive Director/Program Officer is responsible for developing and implementing a variety of humanities programs and events and coordinating the Council's Community Grants program under the supervision of the Council's executive director and board of directors. A detailed description of the Assistant Executive Director/Program Officer's duties may be obtained from the Council's office in Springs Plaza, Gualo Rai or from the Council's website at www.nmihumanities.org.

Applicants for this position must possess: (1). strong analytic, writing and communication skills; (2). knowledge of grants writing and grants administration; (3). the ability to work effectively with people from diverse backgrounds; (4). a working knowledge of NMI history and of current political, social and economic issues confronting the local community; (5). basic computer skills including knowledge of MS Excel, Word and PowerPoint; and (6). the ability to articulate the Council's mission to a wide range of audiences.

Applicants must have a bachelor's degree (B.A. or B.S.) in a humanities discipline from an accredited postsecondary institution. The salary range is from $35,000 to $40,000 depending on qualifications and experience. Benefits are set forth in the NMICH Personnel Policy Manual.

Interested individuals are invited to send a letter of interest, a detailed résumé and the names and addresses of three references to Scott Russell, Executive Director, Northern Mariana Islands Council for the Humanities, Box 506407, Saipan, MP 96950. Applications must be received by Council staff on or before 4:00 p.m. on Friday, 22 January 2010. Those wishing more information about this position may contact Council staff at 235-4785.

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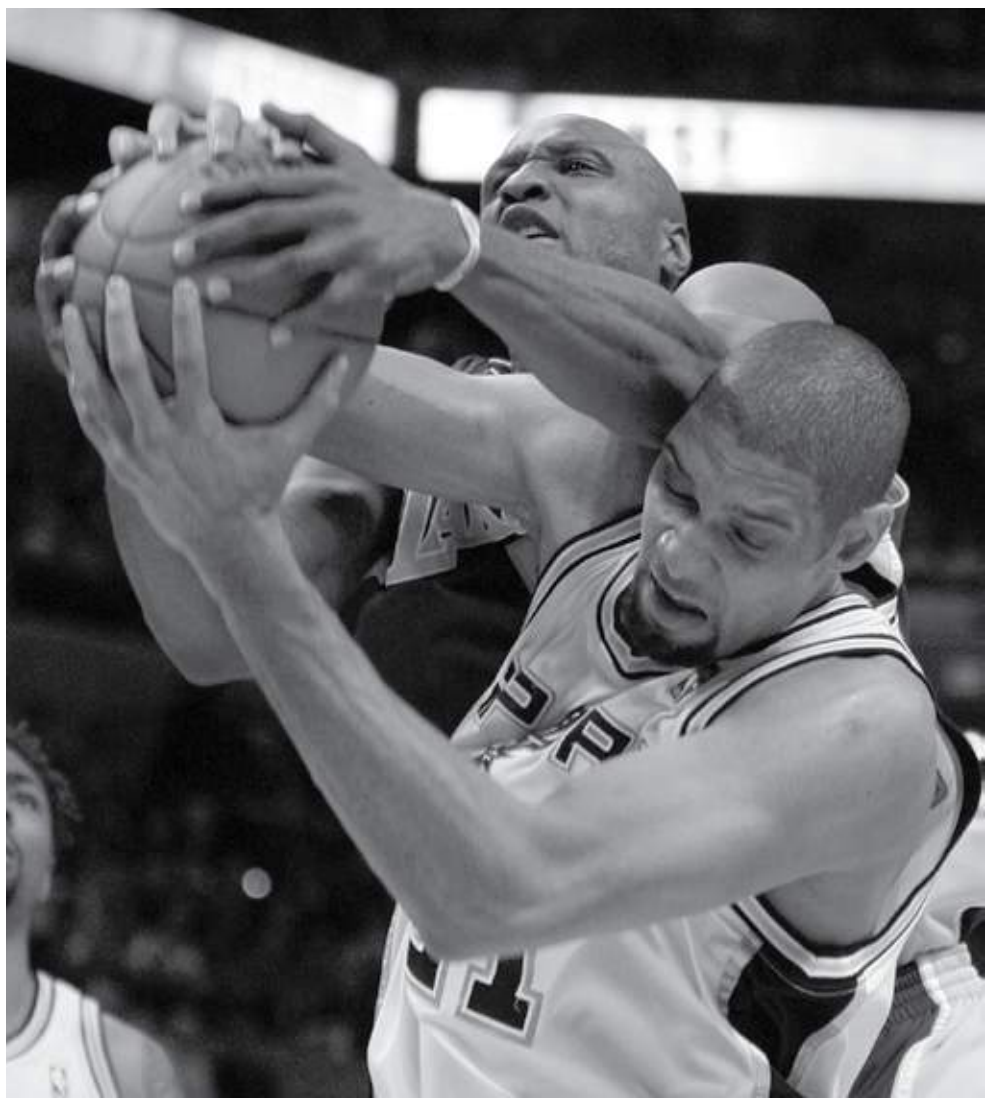
Duncan, Parker lead Spurs over Lakers

SAN ANTONIO (AP)—Tim Duncan had 25 points and 13 rebounds as the San Antonio Spurs showed they can still hang with their Western Conference rivals in a 105-85 victory over the Los Angeles Lakers on Tuesday.

Tony Parker scored 22 as the Spurs got their biggest victory this season.

Kobe Bryant had another off game, scoring 16 points. He again wore a thick splint over his broken right index finger and did not play in the fourth quarter because of back spasms. Lakers coach Phil Jackson said Bryant was probable for Wednesday's game in Dallas.

Andrew Bynum scored 23 points and Ron Artest had 13 for the Lakers, who have lost three of four.



AP

Los Angeles Lakers' Lamar Odom, rear, and San Antonio Spurs' Tim Duncan compete for a loose ball during the fourth quarter of an NBA basketball game Tuesday, Jan. 12, 2010, in San Antonio.

Grizzlies 104, Clippers 102

At Memphis, Tennessee, Rudy Gay and Marc Gasol each scored 24 points and Zach Randolph added 20 as Memphis snapped Los Angeles' four-game winning streak.

The Grizzlies overcame Baron Davis' triple-double, an 18-point deficit and a 36-minute delay caused by a water line break in the fire sprinkler system at FedExForum for their sixth straight home win.

Davis had 27 points, 12 rebounds and 12 assists for the Clippers, who played without starting center Chris Kaman because of a back injury. Starting forward Marcus Camby missed the second half with a stomach virus. Kaman's replacement, DeAndre Jordan, had a season-high 23 points.

Pistons 99, Wizards 90

At Washington, Charlie Villanueva had 23 points and nine rebounds as Detroit ended a 13-game losing streak by beating Washington.

Richard Hamilton and Rodney Stuckey each scored 19 for the Pistons, who hadn't enjoyed a victory in a month: They beat Golden State on Dec. 12.

Detroit lost by 33 points at Chicago on Monday night, and a defeat against Washington would have tied the longest single-season losing streak in franchise history.

Antawn Jamison led the Wizards with 31 points and 10 rebounds, while Randy Foye — who took over at point guard when Gilbert Arenas was suspended indefinitely by the NBA — had 20 points and 10 assists.

Bobcats 102, Rockets 94

At Charlotte, North Carolina, Stephen Jackson scored 16 of his career-high 43 points in the fourth quarter as Charlotte clamped down on defense after halftime to rally past Houston.

Surpassing his previous best scoring night of 42 set nearly six years ago with Atlanta, Jackson shot 15 of 22 and made 10-of-11 free throws while adding eight rebounds. Making up for a subpar night from Gerald Wallace, Jackson keyed Charlotte's comeback from a 13-point, second-quarter deficit.

Boris Diaw added 19 points and seven rebounds, including the clinching three-point play with 50 seconds left.

Trevor Ariza scored 19 points and Luis Scola added 18 points and 14 rebounds for the Rockets, who had won seven straight against Charlotte.

Magic 109, Kings 88

At Sacramento, California, Dwight Howard had 30 points and 16 rebounds as Orlando used a big run to open the fourth quarter and beat Sacramento.

Ryan Anderson started the 18-4 run with a 3-pointer on the opening possession of the quarter to give the Magic a 79-78 lead. Orlando just built on it from there, holding Sacramento to just one field goal in the first 7:14 of the period.

Mickael Pietrus added 18 points and 10 rebounds, Anderson scored 12 and former Kings point guard Jason Williams had 12 points and six assists.

Tyreke Evans scored 18 points and Beno Udrih added 15 for Sacramento, which was outscored 31-10 in the fourth quarter.

Gossage wants steroids users barred from Hall

NEW YORK (AP)—Goose Gossage watched Mark McGwire's televised confession to steroids use and was happy his former teammate came clean. That's where the praise ended, with the Hall of Fame reliever saying there should be no place in Cooperstown for McGwire or any other player who used performance-enhancing drugs.

"I definitely think that they cheated," Gossage said Tuesday in a telephone interview with The Associated Press. "And what does the Hall of Fame consist of? Integrity. Cheating is not part of integrity."

For Gossage, Hank Aaron still holds the career record of 755 home runs and Roger Maris owns the season record of 61. The Goose tosses out the fantastic figures posted by Barry Bonds, McGwire, Sammy Sosa as part of a "cheating era," dismissing them as if they were scuffed baseballs being rolled to the clubbies. He equated them with Pete Rose, barred from the Hall ballot because of his lifetime ban for betting on Cincinnati while managing the team.

"The integrity of the Hall of Fame and the numbers and the history are all in jeopardy," said Gossage, inducted two years ago. "I don't think they should be recognized. Here's a guy Aaron, we're talking about the greatest record of all records. And he did it on a level playing field. He did it with God-given talent. And the same with Maris, absolutely. These are sacred records and they've been shattered by cheaters."

Hall of Famer Willie McCovey wouldn't factor drugs into the equation and said he likely would vote for McGwire if he had the opportunity.

"Whether he took steroids or not, he did so much for baseball," McCovey said. "He almost helped save baseball for a few years there."

Joe Morgan, a Hall of Famer and the board's vice chairman, feels bad for players who didn't use performance enhancers.

"Those guys are being penalized twice," he said. "First, the guys who did steroids had all those great numbers, made all the money, and the guys who didn't do steroids and just had good years, didn't make as much money. So they get hurt there. Now at the end of their careers when you have to compare those numbers to the guys who did do steroids, they're going to get hurt again as far as the Hall of Fame is concerned. So I can't in my own mind excuse what happened, whatever the reason."

U.S. Anti-Doping Agency executive director Travis Tygart dismissed McGwire's claim that steroids didn't help him become a better player, that they only allowed him to become more healthful.

"It's just crazy. I don't buy that for a second," he said. "It's sort of disappointing you don't just come clean, take full responsibility. But the trend is with most athletes we've seen in baseball that they take half responsibility."

Former World Anti-Doping Agency president Dick Pound criticized baseball commissioner Bud Selig, who issued a statement declaring the Steroids Era over.

"I think the jury is still out on that issue and that the self-serving statements by Bud Selig do nothing to increase confidence," Pound said in an e-mail. "What has emerged in the whole baseball mess is that drug use is widespread and that even the best players are involved—and still MLB is whistling past the graveyard."

Steve Trachsel, who gave up McGwire's historic home run No. 62 a dozen years ago, was saddened by McGwire's admission.

"It's disappointing because it's such a great moment in the history of sports. So many people were rooting for him and Sammy, not just in America but all around the world," Trachsel told the AP. "It's kind of disappointing the whole thing is kind of dirty now."

Byron Dorgan, a U.S. Senator from North Dakota, used McGwire's confession as an opportunity to urge the Hall of Fame Veterans Committee to elect Maris, a two-time AL MVP who grew up Grand Forks and Fargo.

"More than forty years after breaking Babe Ruth's home run record, Maris now stands as the only player to do so without the use of steroids," Dorgan said. "It's important to set an honest example for our nation's children who put themselves in danger when they try to emulate their sports heroes by bulking up with performance-enhancing drugs."

McGwire's tearful admission that he used steroids for a decade, including when he hit 70 homers in 1998, was the talk of baseball.

"Hopefully that will help clear the air and we can move on," Houston Astros president of baseball operations Tal Smith said.

McGwire, who retired in 2001, had been widely ridiculed since he evaded questions before a congressional committee five years ago, repeatedly saying he wasn't there to address his past. His confession was sparked by the St. Louis Cardinals' decision in October to hire him as hitting coach.

More Wizards speak to authorities about gun case

WASHINGTON (AP)—With various players missing for various reasons, including some who had to talk to authorities about the Gilbert Arenas gun investigation, only eight members of the Washington Wizards were warming up on court Tuesday as coach Flip Saunders spoke nearby.

"Right now, there is definitely going to be discipline," Saunders intoned, "whether they like it or not."

Clearly, Saunders has his hands full at the moment. He is in his first year with a team dealing with far more serious matters than its 12-24 record after Tuesday night's 99-90 loss to the visiting Detroit Pistons—a club that had lost its previous 13 games.

"We just weren't mentally alert," Saunders said after the game.

Asked how much the shorthanded practices and distractions might have played a role in the defeat, Saunders said: "I don't want to blame it on that, because we might have a lot of those days here over the next month."

Two Wizards, Javale McGee and Mike Miller, were absent from the morning shootaround because they were going to be questioned about what happened with Arenas, who was suspended indefinitely by the NBA last week.

"It's hard, because every day we've been going through so much," guard Nick Young said.

Another player, Andray Blatche, also was slated to be speaking about the Arenas case—and he was barred from practicing anyway Tuesday, having been suspended for the Pistons game for conduct detrimental to the team.

"He said, 'Well, I didn't get a shot in a game.' If you're 6-10, 6-11, you can get a shot by getting an offensive rebound and getting shots. Anybody, whether it's him or anybody, that thinks a coach has to run plays to get you shots—that's the sign of a team that's not going to be a very good team," Saunders said.

Later in the day, asked whether the 6-foot-11 Blatche might feel he's being singled out, Saunders said: "It's like dealing with your kids. You have to do things. As I tried to explain when I talked to Andray: 'It's not against you. It's against what you did. How you acted. So it's nothing against you.' I don't hold grudges over those type of things."

Caron Butler wasn't at the morning shootaround because of what Saunders called "an accident in his family" but he did play against Detroit.

"It's been a little chaotic around here for the most part the last couple days," said Butler, who spoke to authorities on Monday. "That's something that you don't want to have to keep revisiting. As a player, you want to focus on basketball and basketball only."

Also missing Tuesday was Arenas, of course. As was Javaris Crittenton, whose Dec. 21 spat with Arenas prompted the three-time All-Star to take guns out of his locker at the team's arena.

Carroll: Seahawks 'have embraced my approach'

RENTON, Wash. (AP)—Pete Carroll pumped his fist. He talked excitedly and forcefully. He chopped the air with his hands, commanding his new audience.

Even though he had stepped back up into the NFL, he was still in charge—which is exactly why he's in Seattle now instead of Southern California.

The charismatic Carroll took over as the new coach and executive vice president of the Seahawks on Tuesday, enthusiastically seizing an authority that he says mirrors the latitude USC gave him to restore its dynasty.

"They have embraced my approach ... in a manner in which they want to wipe the path clear and give me the clearest opportunity to bring everything that I have to offer. That's really what I was looking for, the trust and belief from the top of the organization," Carroll said a day after his public farewell from USC.

"They don't have an agenda of how they want their football played. They want me to do that. That's exactly and precisely what I was looking for."

After hugging current Seahawk and former USC defensive end Lawrence Jackson in the back of the auditorium, the 58-year-old Carroll was breathless describing how he snared the exact opportunity he's always wanted in the NFL—but never thought he'd get after New England fired him following three seasons as coach through 1999.

"I am so fired up to be here today. Right from the beginning, they undersold. This is a tremendous place to come to work," Carroll said moments after Seahawks CEO Tod Leiweke led him on a tour of the Seahawks' luxurious headquarters for the first time.

Absorbing the scene and what the riches of Seahawks owner and Microsoft Corp. tycoon Paul Allen are affording him, Carroll said: "It's really almost dreamlike for me."

The coach who went 97-19 with two national championships and seven consecutive Pac-10 titles while at USC wore a dark blue suit and paisley tie patterned in Seahawks green and blue.

AP

Former Southern California coach Pete Carroll answers questions from reporters during a news conference after he was introduced as the new head coach and executive vice president of the Seattle Seahawks NFL football team on Tuesday, Jan. 12, 2010, at Seahawks headquarters in Renton, Wash.

The look was new. The Seahawks promise his role will be familiar.

"As guys get other jobs around the league, there isn't always that level of trust and communication from the top down, and there isn't always that willingness to let you do exactly what you feel and how you should do it. That's what I've been given here - and I can't tell you how excited I am about that," Carroll said. "That is what I had at 'SC, and is when I've had my best success."

Carroll had a quick answer for questions on why he is better suited for the NFL now than he was while going 6-10 for the New York Jets in 1994 and 27-21 with two playoff appearances in three seasons with the Patriots.

"Thirteen years ago I took that job in New England—13 years ago!" Carroll said. "I've grown through this experience and I know so much more clearly where I'm coming from. I was not at my best in New York - I can't tell you how far I was then from where I am now. I was not at my best in New England. I think the Seahawks are benefiting now on what I went through. ... So I'm not the same. Hopefully, I'm better."

In the back of the room, Lawyer Milloy nodded his head. "He wants to right his wrongs," the Seahawks' 36-year-old safety said, referring to Carroll's NFL legacy.

Leiweke confirmed Carroll is getting plenty if not final authority on whom Seattle hires as its new general manager. Carroll and Leiweke were to conduct an afternoon interview with Omar Khan, a contract administrator with the Pittsburgh Steelers.

Former Tennessee Titans GM Floyd Reese is also scheduled to interview, along with New York Giants personnel man Marc Ross and Green Bay executive John Schneider through Thursday.

Leiweke said Carroll will work "shoulder to shoulder" with the new GM, and that Carroll may have the final say on the hiring, depending on who the final candidate is.

Leiweke wants a far more harmonious relationship than the fractured one that existed between former coach Mike Holmgren, who was also Seattle's GM from 1999-2002, and GM and president Tim Ruskell, whom the Seahawks forced to resign last month before the team finished 5-11.

Carroll is also assembling his staff, which will use the same principles and play terminology he used at USC. He said he was eager to get done with his news conference so he could run to call Alex Gibbs.

A person with knowledge of the decision told The Associated Press that Gibbs has agreed to leave his job as the assistant head coach of the Houston Texans to join Carroll on the Seahawks' staff. Gibbs will be in charge of the zone run-blocking scheme upon which Carroll wants to base his Seahawks offense.

The person requested anonymity because the contract with the Seahawks had yet to be signed.

Carroll is also bringing USC offensive coordinator Jeremy Bates with him, presumably to do the same job with the Seahawks. USC linebackers coach Ken Norton Jr. and offensive line coach Pat Ruel are also expected to join Carroll in Seattle.

One thing Carroll said he won't change on offense is the quarterback.

Carroll said he is excited to have one with as much experience as 34-year-old Matt Hasselbeck. He emphasized the three-time Pro Bowler is healthy after playing through a bad back, broken ribs and a sore passing shoulder as the Seahawks limped to a 9-23 record since their last playoff game in January 2008.

Seattle fired coach Jim Mora on Friday after less than 12 months on the job, ending the Seahawks' worst two-year stretch since 1992-93.

"I know it's going to be difficult," Carroll said. "And people from where I come from want to say, 'Gosh, why would you do that, when you win all the time in college football, and here you are going into the meat grinder in the NFL?'

"I'm ready. I couldn't be more excited about it. And I can't wait to get started."

Kiffin leaves Tennessee, returns to USC

KNOXVILLE, Tenn. (AP)—Lane Kiffin is returning to Southern California as the Trojans' coach after just one season at Tennessee.

Kiffin was chosen Tuesday to replace Pete Carroll, his mentor and employer for six seasons. Kiffin was the Trojans' offensive coordinator before his brief stints with the Oakland Raiders and the Volunteers.

"This was not an easy decision," he said Tuesday night, reading a brief statement on Tennessee's campus. "This is something that happens very quick. We've been here 14 months, and the support has been unbelievable here. I really believe the only place I would have left here to go was ... Southern California."

His father, respected defensive coach Monte Kiffin, and longtime USC assistant Ed Orgeron also will leave Tennessee to join him, USC said in a statement. Volunteers assistant Kippy Brown, who joined Kiffin's staff less than four weeks ago, was promoted to interim coach.

ESPN.com first reported the surprising move by Kiffin and the Trojans, who needed just one day to fill one of the most desirable jobs in college football. Carroll formally took over the Seattle Seahawks on Tuesday after winning 97 games, seven Pac-10 championships and two national titles over the past nine years.

"We are really excited to welcome Lane Kiffin back to USC," Trojans athletic director Mike Garrett said. "I was able to watch him closely when he was an assistant with us, and what I saw was a bright, creative young coach who I thought would make an excellent head coach here if the opportunity ever arose. I'm confident he and his staff will keep USC football performing at the high level that we expect."

The 34-year-old Kiffin is one of Carroll's top disciples from his nine-year tenure at USC. Kiffin, a former Fresno State quarterback, worked his way up to offensive coordinator in 2005 while also showing impressive skills as the Trojans' recruiting coordinator after Orgeron's departure from Los Angeles.

For two seasons, Kiffin shared responsibility for the Trojans' offense with fellow longtime Carroll assistant Steve Sarkisian, who left USC to take over at Washington after the 2008 season.

Although Kiffin's forceful personality didn't make him a beloved figure among players or administrators, he was a key part of the Trojans' best years under Carroll, coordinating their passing game and providing instruction to quarterbacks Matt Leinart and John David Booty.

Kiffin then became Al Davis' unusual choice to take over the Oakland Raiders as a 31-year-old coach with almost no NFL experience. He made it through just 20 games before an ugly public firing in which Davis called Kiffin a liar who brought "disgrace" on the Raiders.

Kiffin went 7-6 at Tennessee last season as the youngest head coach in the Football Bowl Subdivision. Many credited him with revitalizing the program, but he also brought an unwelcome spotlight on the Vols with several minor NCAA violations.

"I know that I can walk out of here and say this, that we've been here for 14 months and there's not one day I didn't give everything I had to the Tennessee football program," Kiffin said. "We're leaving here 14 months later a lot better team than we were 14 months ago."

Knoxville fire officials and university police were on campus after Kiffin's announcement as students burned mattresses and gathered around the athletic department building in hopes of blocking Kiffin from leaving campus. It was not clear if Kiffin was still on campus at the time.

"I think the students have had kind of a violent reaction to that, and a lot of them are disheartened, upset and feel betrayed that less than a year in that he would be leaving and taking off," Knoxville Fire Department spokesman D.J. Corcoran said.

"The Rock," a giant boulder on campus where students often paint "Happy Birthday" messages, had obscenities directed toward Kiffin. Students tried to enter the room where Kiffin read his statement, holding a sign that read "Go home traitor. It's time," mimicking a campaign the university used to promote Kiffin when he was hired. But the students were turned back before Kiffin talked.

Kiffin certainly didn't sound ready to leave after Tennessee's season ended with a loss to Virginia Tech in the Chick-fil-A Bowl, saying the Vols were "just getting started" - but the Trojans didn't have a vacancy then.

Kiffin owed an $800,000 buyout to Tennessee for leaving early. He told his players about his abrupt departure moments before reading his statement.

"I want to thank coach Kiffin for his work with our program this past year," Tennessee athletic director Mike Hamilton said. "We have already begun a search for the new head football coach of the Tennessee Volunteers, and we'll complete this process as quickly as possible to put the right person in place to lead our great football program forward in the months and years ahead."

During Kiffin's tenure the Volunteers reported six minor NCAA violations ranging from mock news conferences for prospects to mentioning recruits by name on the radio and on his Twitter and Facebook accounts. Three freshman players were charged in an attempted robbery near campus, and the university recently confirmed that the NCAA is looking into the activities of members of the university's Orange Pride student ambassador program as possible recruiting violations.

Pacquiao to get 'Athlete of the Decade' honors

MANILA, Philippines—With no one coming close to the impact of his exploits, Manny Pacquiao, the only seven-division world boxing champion, emerged as the hands-down choice as Athlete of the Decade by the Philippine Sportswriters Association which will hold its annual Awards Night on March 1.

Having been named PSA Athlete of the Year five times this decade—from 2002 to 2004, then in 2006 and 2008, Pacquiao was elevated to the Hall of Fame last year.

Few expected the 30-year-old Pacquiao, a former bakery worker and construction laborer, to morph into the prizefighting maestro that he is now.

"I didn't see this coming," said Pacquiao trainer Freddie Roach, recalling his first meeting with the boxing superstar early in 2001 at the Wild Card gym in Los Angeles. "I never thought he'll be this great."

He stunned the boxing world with a sixth-round technical knockout of South African Lehlo Ledwaba to win the International Boxing Federation super bantamweight title.

It signaled his steady ascent to the top of the sport, which now recognizes him as its top fighter pound for pound.

The list goes on for Pacquiao—first fighter to win seven world titles in as many weight classes (flyweight, super bantamweight, featherweight, junior lightweight, lightweight, junior welterweight and welterweight). ***(PDI)***

HEO

From Page 28

won the championship in the 2009 Pacific Oceania Junior Championships in Fiji, beating Pacific Oceania Training Centre top player Chris Hargrove, and became the first player from Pacific Oceania to gain ranking points in the ITF Junior Circuit.

The MHS senior is currently ranked No. 834. In October last year after conquering POJC and making it to the quarterfinals of a tournament in Fiji, Heo ranked at No. 1,071. In July, after earning ranking points in New Caledonia, Heo climbed from No. 1,185 to No. 959.

The CNMI bet also had been to tournaments in Australia, the Philippines, and Korea. This weekend, he will be leaving for New Zealand to compete in three ITF Junior tournaments and one men's event. Heo is entered in the Sunsmart 18 and Under Canterbury Championships, Auckland 18 and Under ITF Summer Championships, and Tennis Central 18 & U ITF Summer Championships.

After his stint in New Zealand, Heo is expected to lead the CNMI in its title defense bid in the 2010 Micronesian Games in Palau. Heo is trying out for slots on the team, joining Race, former University of Kansas standout Todd Montgomery, and Fiesta Resort & Spa instructor Peter Loyola in the pool.

CAL

From Page 28

took on No. 3 Carol McKenzie (1,300, 162.5) in the first round of the stepladder finals and won by five pins, 132-127.

In the championship round, Cal had some nervous moments before finally upending Chong via a tight score of 168-164.

Aside from Cal, Chong, and McKenzie, 13 other lady keglers took part in the season-ending Queen of the Lanes tournament.

The rest of the field, with their pinfall totals in parenthesis, are as follows: Gigi Zapanta (1,261); Yolanda Villavicencio (1,258); Lala Taitano (1,258); Diane Camacho (1,258); Elena Soll (1,226); Lynn Santos (1,192); Carrie Camacho (1,170); Gloria Omechalang (1,104); Cora Muna (1,102); and Lilian Gutierrez (940).

In an interview after the tournament, Cal said she was fortunate to win considering that Chong gave her quite a battle in the championship round.

The two-time May Masters champion (2007 and 2008), who won three Queen of the Lanes monthly titles this season, said she is dedicating her victory to her mother, Constancia.

Raphael Zapanta, for his part, defeated Leeanne Yarobwemal in the two-game finals, 336-309.

It can be recalled that Zapanta lost to Yarobwemal in the semis of the 2008 Prince of the Lanes (then known as Bing Prince of the Lanes) in the mother of all upsets, 199-153.

The 2008 youth championship was eventually won by Zack Cruz, who beat Yarobwemal in the finals, 188-118.

Zapanta actually lost the first game to Yarobwemal last Sunday, 160-174, but more than made up that deficit with a 176-135 title-clinching victory in the second game.

Yarobwemal had to beat M.J. Aldan in the first round of the stepladder finals, 147-131.

Zapanta topped the six-game roll-off with his 978 pinfalls and 163 average. Yarobwemal came in second with her 922 and 153.67, while Aldan was third with his 884 and 147.33.

Marion McKenzie (837), Nikko Gutierrez (813), and Troy Verdaguer (754) also took part in the season-ending youth tournament.

Zapanta won 11 of 12 Prince of the Lanes monthly tournaments in 2009. He missed the November competition due to illness.

The 2009 Budweiser King of the Lanes will be played this Sunday, also at the Capital Bowling Center.

The 2009 Budweiser King and Queen of the Lanes and 2009 Prince of the Lanes is sponsored by MARPAC and organized by the Saipan Bowling Association.

PAIRE

From Page 28

"MP United's competitive team was excellent so, I looked forward to the huge challenge each time we played them. We tied each time despite both team's efforts and it came down to goal differentials in the end," said Paire player Brenda Schultz.

Joining Schultz on the team were Becca Newman, Emily Gries, Zoe Jewell, Patricia Coleman, Sami Birmingham-Babauta, Connie Camacho, Stephanie Camacho, Summer Palacios, Amber Roberts, and Vanessa Pritchard.

"Each game was a challenge. Each team had their unique playing style and it was always difficult. Every game was hard," Jewell said.

Despite these difficulties, both Schultz and Jewell agreed Paire had a good season in the futsal league and they hope to continue playing as a team and developing more young talents this year.

"Paire had an excellent season in the competitive league. We grew as a team and learned a lot. One of the most exciting things about our team was seeing our youth players shine. It makes me very excited about what the future holds in women's football in the Northern Mariana Islands," Schultz said.

"Hopefully, the Paire women's teams will grow and continue to excel. I would really like to see more new and young players coming out and joining us, and developing their skills," Jewell added.

Paire's new players suited up in the recreational league and topped Matansa Football Club, Independents Football Club, and MP United Football Club 1 and 2 to win the championship.

Paire's recreational squad, which finished the league with a 7-1 win-loss record, had Maria Ornez, Angie Mister, Leanne Loan, Rhonda Camacho, Linda Anastacio, and Temary Gramlich as members.

With their success in the futsal league and other tournaments, Paire aims to continue recruiting players.

"We will focus on recruiting players for our youth programs. We have several National Team players who volunteer to coach including standout players Arkie Resauro, Steve McKagan, Jason Schroeder, and Patricia Coleman. Our girls U18 team looks great so I am optimistic we will expect great things in the future for Paire," Schultz said.

She added these triumphs would not be possible without the help of Docomo.

"We really appreciate our sponsor, Docomo. Through its generous donation, we have been able to cut costs for our youth program so every child can afford to play. Thank you Docomo," Schultz said.

CONSTANT

From Page 28

ketball Court, while UBA also scheduled its last two matches in the round-robin elimination on Monday.

In the PILCOWA caging, GEC Pawnshop was to collide against Cool Water in the masters division to decide the playoff cast. A GEC win will move the team to the next round, joining Ebisuya, University of Loyola, and Wushin. A Cool Water win will result to a three-way tie for the last two playoff berths. The GEC-Cool Water tiff was reset for Tuesday, but it was also called off due to rain.

In the UBA caging, Ol'Aces were to close out their regular season campaign against Cholos, while Noni Saipan and Prospects were to meet in the last game of the elimination.

Ol'Aces is already assured of a semis slot, joining pennant champion Advance in the second round of the playoffs. Cholos is out of competition, while Noni and Prospects are fighting for good spots in the first round of the playoffs.

The third and sixth placer in the regular season will duel in the first round of the playoffs, while the No. 4 and 5 teams will fight in the other first-round duel. Both these games were scheduled last night, but will be moved on a later date due to the cancellation of Monday's games.

UBA president James Lee said the league will be on a wait-and-see mode, as far as rescheduling of games is concerned. Last night, UBA volunteers and officials were drying the court, hoping to play the last two games in the regular season. If games are called off anew, they will try to reset them for tonight.

Scattered rains in the past five days also affected games in the Chamolinian Softball Association's 2009 Budweiser Slow-pitch Softball League at the Capital Hill Ballfield.

Only the Natibu-SaiPal tiff in the first game on Monday was completed. Advance and Berdax played in the second game and finished one complete inning before in rained at the top of the second inning. League organizers were then forced to cancel the third game between Fuegu and G-Ballers.

RGA qualifier, SGA January Ace at COP

Refaluwasch Golf Association and Saipan Golfers Association will both start the 2010 season with a tournament at Coral Ocean Point this Sunday.

RGA will be holding its January Ace qualifier this weekend and check-in and tee times will be at 11am and 12pm, respectively.

Winner of the weekend event will set the score to beat and if his net score remains undefeated, he gets to keep the January Ace and get the first ticket to the RGA Club Championships, which will be played at the end of the year. Tars Olopai won last year's club championship.

Participants in the monthly tournament are encouraged to pay the membership fee of $25.

For more information about RGA tournaments, contact club president Jordan Kosam at 483-4506 or tournament director Dwaine Stephan at 288-0005.

SGA will have an earlier tee-off at the Agingan Point course, as the club's January Ace tournament will have a check-in time at 8am and tee time at 9am.

Winner of the club's first tournament will automatically get an entry to the SGA Ace of the Aces tournament, which is also played at the end of the year.

Vince Deleon Guerrero Rosario is SGA's reigning Ace of the Aces winner, ruling the club championship played in November last year.

Rosario carded the lowest net score of 139 in the two-day tournament held at Kingfisher Golf Links on Nov. 28 and COP on Nov. 29.

For more information about SGA tournaments, contact Larry Guerrero at 256-1052. ***(Roselyn B. Monroyo)***

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Boston	26	10	.722	–
Toronto	19	20	.487	8 1/2
New York	15	22	.405	11 1/2
Philadelphia	12	25	.324	14 1/2
New Jersey	3	34	.081	23 1/2

Southeast Division

Orlando	26	12	.684	–
Atlanta	24	13	.649	1 1/2
Miami	18	18	.500	7
Charlotte	17	19	.472	8
Washington	12	24	.333	13

Central Division

Cleveland	30	10	.750	–
Chicago	16	20	.444	12
Milwaukee	15	20	.429	12 1/2
Detroit	12	25	.324	16 1/2
Indiana	12	25	.324	16 1/2

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Southwest Division

Dallas	25	12	.676	–
San Antonio	23	13	.639	1 1/2
Houston	21	17	.553	4 1/2
New Orleans	19	17	.528	5 1/2
Memphis	19	18	.514	6

Northwest Division

Denver	24	14	.632	–
Portland	23	16	.590	1 1/2
Oklahoma City	21	16	.568	2 1/2
Utah	21	17	.553	3
Minnesota	8	31	.205	16 1/2

Pacific Division

L.A. Lakers	29	9	.763	–
Phoenix	24	14	.632	5
L.A. Clippers	17	19	.472	11
Sacramento	15	22	.405	13 1/2
Golden State	11	25	.306	17

Yesterday's Games

Charlotte 102, Houston 94
Detroit 99, Washington 90
Memphis 104, L.A. Clippers 102
San Antonio 105, L.A. Lakers 85
Orlando 109, Sacramento 88

NBA LEADERS

Scoring

	G	FG	FT	PTS	AVG
Anthony, DEN	33	340	275	985	29.8
Bryant, LAL	37	405	240	1094	29.6
James, CLE	40	407	294	1175	29.4
Durant, OKC	37	357	300	1064	28.8
Wade, MIA	36	335	255	959	26.6
Ellis, GOL	36	373	175	942	26.2
Nowitzki, DAL	36	323	228	900	25.0
Bosh, TOR	39	321	288	936	24.0
Roy, POR	38	317	205	892	23.5
Arenas, WAS	32	253	153	722	22.6
Johnson, ATL	37	305	110	785	21.2
Stoudemire, PHX	38	304	186	794	20.9
Evans, SAC	32	246	153	662	20.7
Randolph, MEM	36	295	143	736	20.4
Kaman, LAC	35	299	116	714	20.4
Gay, MEM	34	260	144	690	20.3
Duncan, SAN	33	265	130	660	20.0
Williams, UTA	34	243	139	668	19.6
Jackson, CHA	35	245	138	675	19.3
Maggette, GOL	35	214	236	671	19.2

FG Percentage

	FG	FGA	PCT
Perkins, BOS	175	274	.639
Howard, ORL	204	334	.611
Gasol, MEM	198	326	.607
Horford, ATL	210	361	.582
Hilario, DEN	202	351	.575
Landry, HOU	225	394	.571
Lee, NYK	292	513	.569
Stoudemire, PHX	304	536	.567
Bynum, LAL	215	387	.556
Gasol, LAL	138	249	.554

Rebounds

	G	OFF	DEF	TOT	AVG
Howard, ORL	37	138	345	483	13.1
Noah, CHI	36	142	297	439	12.2
Camby, LAC	34	104	295	399	11.7
Wallace, CHA	34	73	323	396	11.6
Randolph, MEM	36	167	246	413	11.5
Bosh, TOR	39	122	318	440	11.3
Lee, NYK	37	86	320	406	11.0
Boozer, UTA	38	76	321	397	10.4
Haywood, WAS	34	138	217	355	10.4
Duncan, SAN	33	97	245	342	10.4

Assists

	G	AST	AVG
Nash, PHX	38	428	11.3
Paul, NOR	28	310	11.1
Williams, UTA	34	331	9.7
Rondo, BOS	35	336	9.6
Kidd, DAL	37	325	8.8
B. Davis, LAC	35	283	8.1
James, CLE	40	313	7.8
Westbrook, OKC	37	267	7.2
Arenas, WAS	32	230	7.2
Duhon, NYK	37	233	6.3

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

2010 MTEC Tank 2 Tank Aquathon Winners

PHOTOS By ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Top finishers in the 2010 MTEC Tank 2 Tank Aquathon pose with Marianas Tourism Education Council president Ed Cho, right, and vice president Vickie Benavente, third left during the awards presentation on Saturday.

Tsunami Saipan's Angel De Jesus receives her prize after topping the girls' 16-and-under age group division.

Andres Buitrago holds the gift certificate he won after ruling the open division of the 1-kilometer swim and 5-km run race last weekend.

Open division runner-up Mieko Carey shows her prize.

Open division third placer Matt Mancao is all smiles after getting his prize from MTEC president Ed Cho and vice president Vickie Benavente.

Tsunami Saipan's Kai Staal, left, and Shin Kimura claim their runner-up prize in the team event.

Stuart Smith, center, receives the top prize in the team event on behalf of teammate Ketson "Jack" Kabiriel.

Anything Goes top finisher John Jenkins, center, pose with MTEC president Ed Cho and vice president Vickie Benavente.

Tsunami Saipan's Kaito Yanai receives a Saipanda bag for winning the 9 to 12 age group competition.

Lucas Kang, right, won in the 8-and-under age group with a time of 11:42.

Pacquiao to get 'Athlete of the Decade' honors

With no one coming close to the impact of his exploits, Manny Pacquiao, the only seven-division world boxing champion, emerged as the hands-down choice as Athlete of the Decade by the Philippine Sportswriters Association. 26

Saipan Tribune
Sports

Duncan, Parker lead Spurs over Lakers

Tim Duncan had 25 points and 13 rebounds as the San Antonio Spurs showed they can still hang with their Western Conference rivals in a 105-85 victory over the Los Angeles Lakers on Tuesday. 24

Heo offered to play collegiate tennis

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

CNMI bet and Pacific Oceania's top-ranked player Ji Hoon Heo received offers from five college/universities in the mainland to play for their team.

"I got a couple of full scholarship offers from some schools in the U.S. They are interested in having me play on their team. Some of them are intercollegiate tennis, some Division II, and some Division I," said Heo, who will be graduating this year from Marianas High School.

Heo declined to name the schools, as he is still talking with their respective coaches and officials. However, during the NMASA meeting last week, CNMI coach Jeff Race said Heo is being considered by Michigan State, Mercer, University of California-San Diego, Kansas, and Hawaii Pacific University.

"Of course, I prefer a Division I school. I am aiming for that and hopefully I can play at the top of a Division I school. It feels great to have a chance to play college tennis. College tennis level is very high and this is one of my goals. I hope to make a big impact on the team I will get to join in college," the 17-year-old netter added.

Michigan State, Mercer University, and Kansas are NCAA Division I schools, while University of California-San Diego, and Hawaii Pacific University are in NCAA Division II.

If Heo makes the team of any of the five colleges/universities, he will be one of the first tennis players from the CNMI to get a scholarship and play in the NCAA. Former junior player Ralph Buenaventura and Tim Quan had a chance to play collegiate tennis in Hawaii and California, respectively, but both were walk-on players.

Heo attracted the attention of collegiate teams after a successful 2009 season. He

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ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Ji Hoon Heo, seen here in a recent local tournament, hopes to gain a scholarship from a NCAA Division I school after graduating from Marianas High School later this year.

Cal tops Queen of Lanes, Zapanta is bowling Prince

MARK RABAGO
Raphael Zapanta, left, and Ron Cal flash the No. 1 sign after winning the 2009 Budweiser Queen of the Lanes and 2009 Fiji Water Prince of the Lanes, respectively , last Sunday at the Capital Bowling Center.

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSISTANT EDITOR

Ron Cal recorded a first when she won the 2009 Budweiser Queen of the Lanes championship, while Raphael Zapanta exorcised the ghost of his 2008 debacle by winning the 2009 Fiji Water Prince of the Lanes title last Sunday at the Capital Bowling Center.

Cal topped the eight-game roll-off for the Queen of the Lanes then nipped Diane Chong, 168-164, for the yearly women's tiara.

The veteran lady kegler knocked down 1,339 pinfalls (167.38 average) in the qualifier to take the No. 1 seed, which gave her a bye in the first round of the stepladder finals.

Chong, who came in second in the eight-game roll-off with her 1,306 (163.25),

See CAL on Page 26

Paire sweep in futsal league

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Members of Paire Football Club pose for a group photo after ruling the 2009 NMIFA Futsal Fall League last month at the Northern Marianas College Gymnasium.

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Paire Football Club closed out the 2009 season with a sweep of the NMIFA Women's Futsal Fall League, ruling both the competitive and recreational divisions last month.

Paire claimed the championship in the competitive league after edging MP United Football Club in the point system. Both teams ended the double-round robin tournament with 6-2-0 win-draw-loss records, but Paire took the title after scoring more goals (30) against MP United (28).

See PAIRE on Page 26

Constant rain causes cancellation of games

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

The 2009 UBA/Miller Lite Men's Basketball League and 2009 PILCOWA Basketball League are running behind schedule as scattered showers forced the cancellation of their games.

Rains brought by trade-wind convergence in the Marianas have been hitting the island since Saturday, leaving the outdoor court of Garapan and JP Centre Building unplayable.

PILCOWA caging was supposed to play its last game in the regular season on Sunday at the JP Centre Bas-

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ROSELYN B. MONROYO
The outdoor 2009 UBA/Miller Lite Men's Basketball League is behind schedule because of the inclement weather Saipan has experienced the past week.